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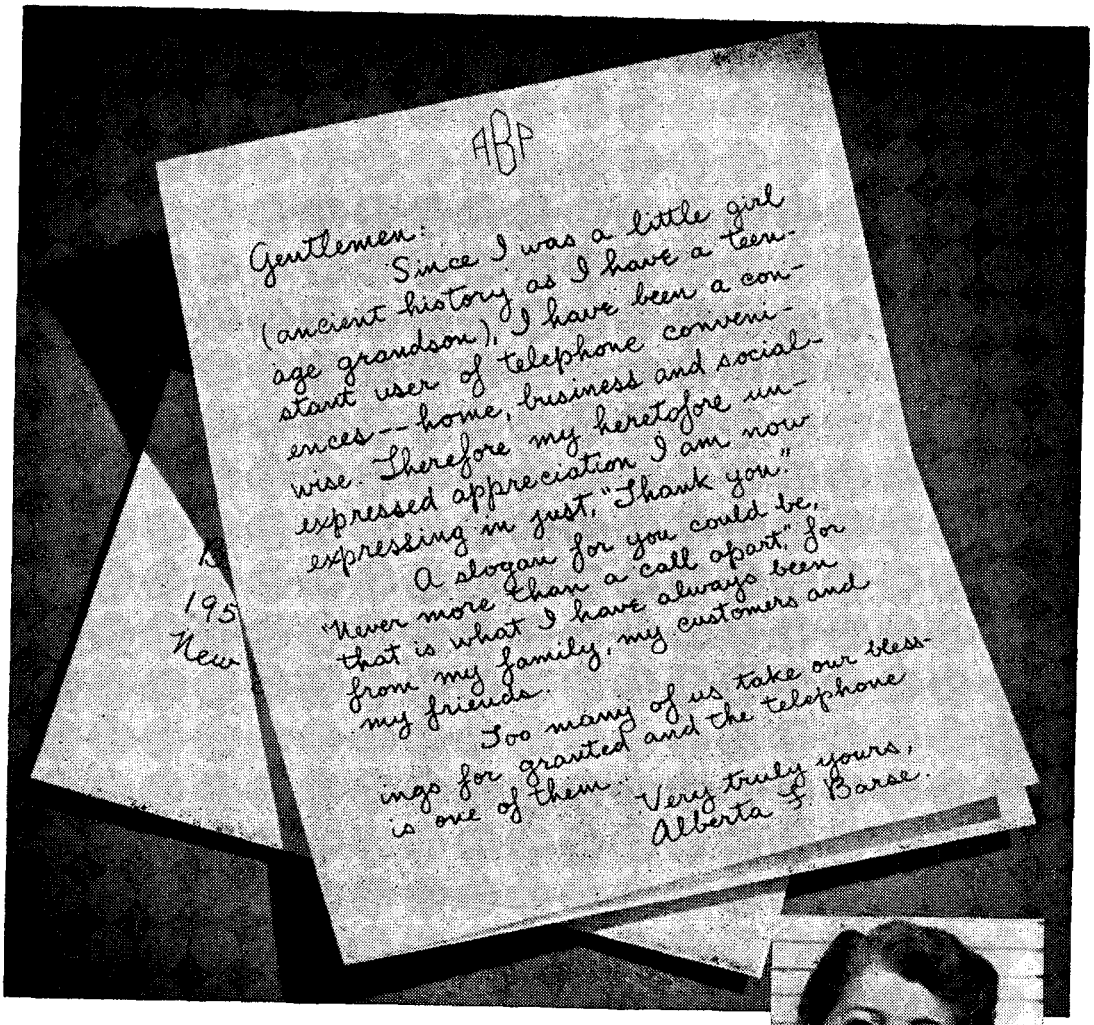

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

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THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR

VOLUME 25 *Winter, 1955-56* NUMBER 1

Editorial

August, 1955, marked the end of ten years since Hiroshima and the conclusion of World War II. This decade has been a time of uneasy peace, of intermittent wars that have threatened to spread farther than they actually have, of the increasing challenge of Russian, Chinese and international communism, of poverty and starvation in many parts of the world, of frightening further developments in massively destructive weapons—and much more recently, of tentative and uncertain gropings toward a stabilized order of world peace.

It is far too soon to appraise with any confidence this latest development. Yet it seems an appropriate time to take stock—to ask where we are, how we got here, and where we may be going. To this end THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR devotes the entirety of its present number, the first of its twenty-fifth year, to an examination of the human situation today.

We have not dictated the subject for any article or essay in this issue. Instead, we have invited a number of distinguished writers and thinkers to discuss whatever aspect of the present human situation seemed to them most important. In the interests of diversity and comprehensiveness, we have asked to participate a theologian, an educator and literary man, a biologist, a psychologist and historian of ideas, an ecologist, and a political commentator and historian of civilization. We of the SCHOLAR hope and believe that you will find what they have written as evocative and richly diversified as we have.

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Although we have an even larger number of short reviews in the book section than usual, the rest of this department is devoted to three essays on one or another aspect of the present literary scene by literary critics of proved distinction. Even Joseph Wood Krutch's regular column, "If You Don't Mind My Saying So," is given over to the large general theme of this issue. Indeed, I think that the reader who wants to turn to the other pieces in the Winter number in a sympathetic mood would do well to begin his reading with Mr. Krutch's department.

I shall not attempt, in this brief introductory word, to find a dubious unity in the highly individual selections that constitute the text of this special number of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, lest I impose an arbitrary and artificial one upon them. I shall content myself with two observations. One is that the method we have used in developing the contents of this number seems to me characteristic of what is the best hope of our society, even our civilization: Do not impose a particular exclusive form or invoke a particular ritual in the pursuit of truth; find the best people you can and ask them to give you their best.

My second observation comes from my reading of the distinguished contributors in this issue. However different in other respects, each, it seems to me, has faced with candor and fearlessness some of the darkest and most disturbing elements in the world of today; each, in accordance with his own moral and intellectual idiom, has proposed a way out or illuminated a path of hope. I am reminded of Francis Bacon who, having cited at great length the reasons there were in his time for despairing of achieving any certain knowledge or even discovering roads to it, went on to say, "I am now therefore to speak touching Hope."

These are simple words, but they carried then, and may carry now, a weight beyond their literal and obvious meaning. The tough resilience, the undespairing creative tenacity of man—once and whenever he has faced with humility the faulty tissue of which he is made and the moral tumors to which he is susceptible—is the one best hope of our world.

HIRAM HAYDN

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The Cause and Cure of the American Psychosis

REINHOLD NIEBUHR

WE SEEM TO BE EMERGING during the past twelve months from an hysterical mood which had all the symptoms of a collective psychosis. We had taken a position of apoplectic rigidity in confronting our foe, and we were riven with fears and alarms about subversion at home. The French Existentialist Sartre declared only a little more than a year ago, "America has the rabies," though it must be admitted that his judgment expressed an hysterical mood in France comparable to our own. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that our moral prestige as the hegemonous power in the free world was gravely impaired by the widely held conviction that our judgments were too emotional to be safe or trustworthy. It may be an indication of the change of mood in the nation that a year after the Army-McCarthy hearings, the nationalist wing of the Republican party could muster only four votes against the President's policy of moderation in dealing with the Soviets and in preparing for a conference "at the summit."

This hysterical mood developed in the postwar period until it reached its climax a year ago and then abated. The history of this mood raises the question about its cause and the cure. If we seek for the cause, we must ascertain what caused this nation to react so differently to common dangers which all the free nations faced in the world-wide Communist movement and the prospects of an atomic conflict of monstrous proportions. These perils are so great that they might be assumed to be the cause of the psychosis. But

✪ REINHOLD NIEBUHR is vice-president of the faculty of Union Theological Seminary in New York City. He has been professor of Christian Ethics and Philosophy of Religion at the Seminary since 1928. His latest book, published in the spring of 1955, is *The Self and the Dramas of History*.

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since the other nations less powerful than we, and in some respects exposed to more danger than ourselves, were not so emotional as we were, we must look for some unique aspects of the American experience to explain our mood.

We find two unique elements in the American experience which can be sharply distinguished from the experience of other nations and which may account for the American psychosis. The first was the rapidity with which we vaulted to the position of world leadership. At the beginning of the century there were no indications of our future eminence in world affairs. We were rocked in the cradle of continental security and had little understanding of the fact that the peace of the world rested upon a precarious balance of power managed by Britain; and that our security was parasitical on the British navy. We entered the First World War peripherally and reluctantly; and we understood so little that the war had undermined the British basis of our security that we attempted to insure ourselves against another involvement by fantastic neutrality legislation. We shivered on the banks of international politics between the wars, and in the days of debate about "intervention," we would probably not have summoned the resolution to follow the dictates of both our conscience and our interests if Japan had not unwisely forced us into the conflict.

We emerged from the Second World War incomparably the strongest nation on earth, or at least the strongest of the free nations. European nations professed to have no confidence in our capacity for continuing responsibility, but it soon became apparent that we were done with our youthful isolationism. We surveyed the world from a position of great power. But our power rested solely on our economic strength and our derivative military might. We had had no apprenticeship in the tasks of world politics, no experience with its hazards, and no stomach for the frustrations of leadership in a catastrophic era. It may well have been the fright which overtook us when we suddenly found ourselves confronting unaccustomed tasks and meeting unimaginable perils that accounted for our psychosis. If this was the cause, the cure for the mood was more experience, which we have since acquired to some degree.

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The contrast between the breadth of our responsibilities and our lack of experience cannot, however, alone account for our hysterical mood. We must look for other unique aspects of the American experience to account for at least a part of our hysteria. Perhaps the most plausible explanation is that the contradiction between the hopes of the past century and the realities of this era has been heightened in America until it has reached catastrophic proportions. All the roseate hopes of the previous century did not anticipate the realities of a world-wide Communist conspiracy and the perils of an atomic war. These realities were unimaginable in the previous century because it had a very simple frame of meaning for history according to which man's phenomenal triumphs over nature, his exploitation of natural resources and his harnessing of natural energies would automatically redound to the benefit of mankind. The "century of hope" did not understand that every enlargement of man's freedom over nature would make for both good and evil consequences. This was the basic mistake from which all miscalculations about the future were derived. By the wisdom of hindsight we can now see that atomic wars, as well as an "economy of abundance" are the fruits of technical advance; and that the evils of communism are the fruits of the very pretensions about man's control over history which characterized all the thought of the nineteenth-century optimists.

These false hopes were, of course, shared by the whole of Western culture. The disappointment of the hopes did not, however, lead to psychotic consequences in any advanced nation besides our own. Perhaps the reason for this exceptional fruit in our nation is that the optimistic mood of the nineteenth century was dissipated in the nations of Europe in the First World War, which was the effective conclusion of the nineteenth century. America was the one nation which tried to, and did, maintain the mood of the nineteenth century far into the twentieth century.

Perhaps it would be more correct to say that the mood was maintained partly by the unique circumstances of American life and partly by various strategems and miscalculations intended to cover or obscure the hiatus between expectations and realities, but hav-

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ing the effect of widening the contradiction between hopes and present experiences until it became dangerous to our mental health.

The unique circumstances of American life which extended the mood of the nineteenth century into the sorry realities of this century consisted of the enjoyment of domestic security and well-being in which all the hopes of the previous century seemed to be fulfilled; but this domestic security and growing justice formed a paradise suspended in a hell of international insecurity. The contradiction between the domestic and the international situation would alone have been sufficient to prompt a case of collective schizophrenia. This situation was aggravated by the peculiar destiny of this nation in foreign affairs, which made us more insecure in the days of our mature strength than we were in the days of our infant impotence. We had grown tremendously powerful, but the intricate web of destiny in which we were called upon to exercise our power grew more rapidly than our power. We thus suffered the fate of experiencing impotence in the control of historical destiny at the precise moment when we seemed to have more power than any nation in world history.

These circumstances were not within our control. They merely represented our ironic destiny. But we did add to the confusion by conscious and quasi-conscious efforts to preserve the optimism of the past century in defiance of the unhappy realities of the first half of this century.

The miscalculations of the future in the first half of this century were more specific than those which were prompted by the idea of progress in the previous century; and some of them were due to unpredictable historic events which could not have been foreseen even if ideological bias had not prompted opinions. It was, for instance, unpredictable that a panacea designed for a technical civilization and having no designed relevance except in a situation of "capitalistic crisis" should have found lodgment in the agrarian world and should become a world-wide political movement, with its center in Russia and spreading from there, particularly to the Asian world. This development might have been foreseen by a more accurate analysis of the social resentments in a decaying feudal

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order, and the antidotes for these resentments which the more flexible equilibria of power in a technical society provided. But no one could have foreseen that unique combination of dogmatic fury and tactical flexibility by which Lenin refashioned Marxism, adapted it to an agrarian society, and made the minority of a minority the lever of power in the revolutionary situation in the collapsed political order of the Russian monarchy at the conclusion of the First World War. It was by this peculiar combination of personal qualities that the seemingly harmless revolutionary Marxist dream at the beginning of the century became the nightmare of tyranny which gained more and more political power, particularly after Stalin revised the Leninist revision of Marxism.

The irresponsible politics of Hitler forced the democratic world into a defensive alliance with this growing Communist power. That alliance generated many illusions which obscured the menace of communism and tended to preserve the optimism of the previous century. Just as the "Bad Man" theory of the Kaiser's Germany tended to obscure the important fact that Germany had indeed upset the balances of European politics with irretrievable finality, so also the more plausible theory of the "bad" Hitler, whose defeat would set all things right, tended to obscure the menace of the growing Communist movement with which we were allied for the defeat of fascism. Some of the illusions which obscured the menace of communism were prompted by the wartime alliance and by the desperate hope that the alliance would outlast the war. Winston Churchill had, perhaps, fewer illusions about communism than any other man. Yet his policies at Yalta were not radically different from those of Roosevelt. They were prompted by the hope of preserving the wartime partnership as long as possible. The alternative, which we now experience, seemed too dreadful to contemplate.

Some of the illusions were ideologically prompted. It was a favorite theory, for instance, that the Nazi tyranny was generated by "irrationalism" and "moral cynicism." Since the Communists were not "irrational" in the same way as the Nazis, and since their politics rested upon utopian ideals which the democratic world shared, it became fashionable to regard communism as another form of

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democracy and to hide the fact that the most terrible cruelties could be generated by these utopian illusions. These misconceptions were not by any means only "leftist" errors. General Eisenhower had assured our Congress after the war that we had nothing to fear from the Russians, since we were informed by a common "anti-imperialism." The barb at Britain was unmistakable.

There were both ideological and practical reasons for preserving illusions about our late ally and present foe, and for blinding our eyes to the dread realities which we now confront. We were, in short, persuaded by both the practical necessities of statesmanship and by the ideological necessities of a refuted historical optimism to postpone as long as possible a consideration of the full import of the present historical situation with the picture of an intransigent and fanatic foe and the possibility of an atomic conflict with him. The illusion of our monopoly of atomic weapons was an additional reason for postponing the reckoning with the facts of history.

Our full disillusionment, both from the basic views inherited from the nineteenth century and the ancillary ones by which we tried to preserve our optimism against the facts of experience, required about a decade and reached its height only a year ago. Out of this disillusion we became addicted to an hysterical and defeatist mood which our friends and allies regarded as psychotic and which persuaded us to look at the future with an unwarranted pessimism, analogous to the previous unwarranted optimism. The fact that some of our atomic secrets were stolen and that some trusted bureaucrats proved themselves untrustworthy heightened the hysteria and persuaded extremists to indict the whole Rooseveltian regime as involved in collaboration with communism at home and abroad. A squalid demagogue's name was used in fact to characterize the mood of the hysterical era, though he only exploited and did not create the fears that dominated the consciousness of the public. Partisan politicians who were not demagogues in the true sense nevertheless tried to create the impression that the steady advance of communism in Asia was due to "betrayals" or mistakes in our foreign policy. The power of communism was consistently overestimated, and an ultimate conflict with Communist forces was

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regarded as inevitable by a great portion of our population. We had merely preserved the optimistic mood of the previous century into the hard realities of this century. Even the change of administration, which might have alleviated the fears of complicity with the hated foe, made plausible by our wartime alliance with him, aggravated rather than mitigated our hysteria, particularly since the Republican Administration dealt softly with the demagogic exploiters of our hysteria.

Yet we are now in the fortunate position of looking in retrospect upon this decade of postwar hysteria as something that has been vanquished.

By what therapy were we cured of our psychosis? The therapy was derived from some of the same unpredictable events of history that entered into the hiatus between the realities and our expectations. The first of these unpredictable effects of history was the monstrous proportions of atomic weapons and the corresponding fear of mutual annihilation which the prospect of an atomic conflict engendered. This result was unpredictable because, in the past, arms races were the prelude of war, and the increase in the lethal efficacy of mankind's weapons did nothing to change this fateful tendency. Nobel, the inventor of dynamite, believed that the increased destructiveness of the weapons would ultimately make war impossible. But before the invention of the atomic weapons these hopes proved to be illusory. The degree of increasing destructiveness did not seem to be a deterrent. But it soon became apparent that atomic weapons, particularly the hydrogen bomb, had changed this grim fact of history, and in Churchill's eloquent phrase, "Security has become the child of terror and survival the twin brother of annihilation." Both sides were conscious of the peril and began to walk warily on the edge of the abyss. Even the Communists began to talk about the effects of an atomic war upon "civilization" and forgot their absolute distinction between "capitalism" and their allegedly new civilization. Thus we were unexpectedly able to extract hope from the very hopelessness of our situation.

Another rather unexpected development contributed to the relaxation of our emotional tension. The Communist power, which

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did not conform to our former hopes that it would become less intransigent, showed signs of decay in its monolithic unity. The legendary dictator died, and the post-Stalin era of communism proved to possess more flexibility and to suffer from more instability than had been apparent. If the hopes of previous decades had been proved dupes, our fears now seemed to be liars. The monolithic strength of the Communist movement was not so formidable as it appeared. The military oligarchy seemed to be in effective control of the "collegiate" dictatorship which succeeded Stalin. Generals and capitalists have proved to be less intent upon war than the Marxist theory assumes. At any rate, the generals seemed intent on relaxing tensions. They finally gave captive Austria her long desired freedom. They ate humble crow in an effort to beguile Tito's Yugoslavia back into the Communist fold. This effort proved to be unsuccessful; but it revealed a diplomatic flexibility which the free world will find more formidable than the old intransigence, although it makes a world war less probable.

All these developments relaxed international tensions and contributed to the relief of our own nation from the psychosis from which it seemed to be suffering. Whether as cause or effect, some rather unpredictable events in our own history made for the achievement of a more flexible, and less apoplectic, attitude toward world events. An amiable President, who originally enhanced the prestige of our neurotic nationalists by his inability to deal rigorously with the chief demagogue of our era, finally found himself and consistently rejected the advice of those of his advisers whom he had appointed to satisfy the nationalistic elements in his party. His policy of moderation, prompted by both moral and political instincts superior to those of his supposedly more adept political advisers, quickly validated itself in the hearts of our citizens. Extreme nationalism consequently suffered a rapid loss of prestige. The commotion about the offshore islands of China represented the last evidence of hysteria in the nation. Since then the common sense of the people has been asserting itself increasingly.

Thus we were involved in a decade of extravagant fears, occasioned by the disappointment of extravagant hopes. Our emergence

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from this hysterical mood is so recent that we cannot be certain of our cure. Certainly the world situation is still sufficiently menacing to prompt us to new fears and alarms. The Communist power is not less resolute but only more full of guile. We were frequently saved from grievous errors by the even more grievous errors of our adversaries. It is apparent that we cannot rely on this way of escape in the future. The struggle with world communism will be rigorous and exacting and there will be no guarantee that the inevitable local engagements may not be the occasion for a global conflagration. The Damocles sword of atomic destruction will continue to hang over us despite the greater flexibility on both sides. The obvious intent of the Communists is to increase the neutralist sentiment throughout the world, but particularly in Asia, and thus to soften the alliance against communism. Our lack of moral prestige in Asia and Africa, chiefly due to inheritances from past centuries and to too tardily corrected mistakes of the past, will probably make for many Communist victories before the tide turns and even the former colonial world recognizes the "emancipators" to be the bearers of a more grievous tyranny than those of the past. If such triumphs by communism come to pass we may again be overcome by hysteria. But meanwhile we have at least the security which is derived from a sober, rather than a neurotic, consideration of our opportunities and perils.

If we are to draw conclusions from the course of history which has refuted both our optimistic and our pessimistic miscalculations, it becomes apparent that the optimistic ones, lasting for five decades, were chiefly derived from faulty frames of meaning, the chief of such frames being the idea of historical progress. Various ancillary and derivative frames of meaning were designed to obscure the refutation of the original optimism. In our own nation, particularly, they served merely to perpetuate the hiatus between the experience of history and our interpretation of it, until the contradiction between the two created a national psychosis.

The pessimistic miscalculations, on the other hand, were mainly the result of the mood of despair into which we as a nation sank when this contradiction became painfully apparent, and a genera-

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tion which had been promised heaven on earth was confronted with something very like hell.

But many of the mistakes about future history were related to neither the one nor the other cause. They came about because history is full of surprising contingencies which no one can foresee or forecast. That is an additional reason why it is necessary to abate our pretensions of both omniscience and omnipotence about the drama of history and live according to the maxim: "Sufficient unto the day are the evils thereof."

We are not children of the day. Our creative responsibilities require as much foresight as the future's impenetrable veil will allow us to exercise. But we are only creative creatures, and therefore always creatures, no matter how creative we may become and no matter how great our individual or collective power be. This is the chief lesson to be learned from the refutation of both our hopes and our fears, particularly by a nation so young and so powerful as our own.

Our best chance for survival lies not in our courage or our resolution so much as in our modesty and patience. We cannot master the forces of history, but we may be able to beguile them. That would include the ability to wait upon the disintegration of a tyrannical system which is so contradictory to the requirements of human nature that it must ultimately disintegrate. Our modesty must include carefulness in making historical analogies. Predictions about the future based upon analogy are confusing because history never exactly repeats itself. The analogy between the Nazi and the Communist tyranny may lead to the erroneous conclusion, for instance, that the Communist tyranny is as bent upon war as the Nazi one. But while their totalitarianism is similar there is a great difference between the urgency of the one and the lack of historical urgency of the other. It will not be too adventurous because it foolishly believes that "historical dialectic" is working for its success. If we believe that it is not, we could not do better than remain prepared and await the verdict of history on our opposing creeds.

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The Flowering of Latter-Day Man

MAX LERNER

IF MAN TODAY IS DOOMED FOR TOMORROW he shows a strange upwelling of energy and bounce. Surely history offers no parallel to the paradox of a prevailing sense of doom accompanied by far-reaching ferment in technics and thought, culture and society. If man is candidate for a corpse, then the about-to-be corpse is showing the most heterodox stirrings of vitality.

I have been finishing a difficult book on America as a civilization, and through the decade since I began the book I have made little headway with the problem of where this civilization is moving—and along with it the world whose destiny is linked with its own. There is little question in my mind that America's situation is also the world's. While I find the concept of American "uniqueness" a useful one, that uniqueness lies not in the differences of America in nature and destiny from other civilizations, but in the wide margin of its lead in technology and power, and the fact that it has therefore become the carrier for many world changes. It prefigures in its cultural style and personality traits many of the emerging trends and traits elsewhere. The American is thus an archetypal man, not in the Jungian sense of reaching back to a prehistoric past and a racial unconscious, but in the quite different sense of reaching into the common future of technical man and his society.

Thus when I speak of "latter-day man," I speak of the type I know best—the American—while implying at the same time that what I say is roughly true of other peoples as they enter and pass through similar experiences of technology and culture.

What is there of the latter-day, we may ask, in latter-day man? Here the exuberance of American standards of living and the

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stock-market boom is dismally deceptive. Throughout the world there is the feeling of having experienced much, perhaps too much —wars and revolutions, and the incineration of millions, and the preparations for the radioactive poisoning of still more millions. This is a weary feeling, of having almost reached the ultimate in the Faustian bargain of man's mastery over nature and having glimpsed in atomic power more of mastery and also more of death than man is ready to face.

The old apocalyptic vision of mankind going to its death in an orgy of revolutionary class-conflict no longer has much validity. The classic revolutionary impulse, from the Gracchi to Lenin, is played out, because under modern conditions revolutions can only be successful through wars and can only lead to wars—and war has become the Medusa-head that turns us all to radioactive stone.

I do not say that we have seen the end either of revolutions or of Communist struggle. When in Asia, I saw enough to convince me that the colonial-nationalist thrust toward self-assertion will not be arrested until it has used up its energy. The African movements are waiting in the wings to take the stage in the next act. But I do say that a sense of limits has been imposed on all of these movements, including the Communist, perhaps especially the Communist, which was not there earlier. It is the fear of embroiling their region, their cause, and the world in the most destructive of wars. In that sense Marxism has become archaic in its ultimate power-aspects, since the essence of it was the impersonal march of history —over the bodies of men and empires, if need be—toward a predestined goal. That impersonal march is now banned by a self-imposed tabu.

What remains, then, of the revolutionary impulse? The struggle for nationalist self-realization by pressures short of destructive war. What remains of the Communist impulse? The struggle for mastery of as many of the nation-states as possible by methods short of destructive war. What remains of the capitalist democratic impulse? Similarly, the struggle to maintain its power and to fulfill its inner purposes and possibilities by means short of destructive war. What has happened to the world is strangely reminiscent of the "love-rack" in James Cain's novels, when two people who had once loved each other are caught in a common guilt of a committed

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crime. In the world's case it is not a love-rack but a hate-rack, with two systems that had hated each other now finding themselves caught in the common guilt of an about-to-be-committed crime from which they recoil. Thus they are unwillingly imprisoned in a brotherhood they do not feel but from whose protective embrace they dare not break.

If there is this sense of bounds, it is for the first time in the history of the modern nation-state. In their wars and revolutions men have been overpassing the bounds that divide the human from both the godlike and the satanic. J. L. Talmon, in his writings on the "totalitarian democracy" of the French revolutionary epoch, and Hannah Arendt, in her book on totalitarian imperialism, have fixed upon the same dramatic paradox: the movements that overpassed the bounds into the bestial always were linked with some idea—democracy, freedom, nationalism, race, progress—which started with the fire of idealism in it. The Nazi crematoria, the Russian purge-trials and extermination camps, the Chinese mass liquidations, were all the logical outcome of passionate ideas that set no bounds to themselves and had no bounds set to them. One can say the same about the Japanese officer-elite that started the Asiatic war and about the highly idealistic American civilians, including Truman and Stimson, who felt that the transcending law of survival empowered them to end the war with atomic death. Today, whether out of guilt or out of some sense of innocence that never faltered through all the planetary turmoil, we are carefully putting some of the young Japanese girls through operation after operation in facial surgery, in an effort to repair what the bombs have disfigured. The Russians are releasing some of their political prisoners and returning Nazi war prisoners, and the Germans have been paying some restitution to Israel for the property taken from their Jewish victims.

If all this seems difficult to reconcile, consider the case of the H-bomb. Insofar as there is objective ground for fearing the physical doom of humanity, the H-bomb is it. We know little of whatever scruples the Russians may have had in moving toward the manufacture of the H-bomb. We do know, since ours is a free country, that American scientists faltered for a moment in the face of the apocalypse of death. Even Teller, who led the group that

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pushed its doubts aside, has written how he and his colleagues sighed with relief when they found that the fusion bomb would not set the whole earth on fire. The demands of defense and patriotism, however, drove scientists and administrators on, whatever camp they were in, and the division of labor enabled them to leave the ethical questions to the philosophers who specialize in such matters.

This then is at least part of what we mean by the latter-day mood of latter-day man. He has looked into the future and it doesn't work. He has caught a glimpse of what man could do to man if and when he follows to their logical conclusion the institutions of war, nationalism and science. The glimpse has made him sadder, if not wiser. He has been through the Promethean phase of stealing fire from the gods and letting the brands burn as they will. He is faced by the unshatterable fact that he is not God and cannot act as if he were, lest he turn all the planets into a hell. Very late in his latter-day phase he has learned at least one bound that he cannot overpass without committing suicide—the bound of atomic war and radioactive devastation. I don't say that he has learned yet to hold himself this side of the thin line that divides him from suicide, but he has at least had to face the consequences that will flow from not holding himself back.

One could make out a pretty strong case for the proposition that there is a crisis in the condition of society which is as grave as the crisis of survival wrought by the H-bomb. One finds a widespread belief, especially among younger sociologists who seem to have been born old, that there is a "New Society" in which almost everything is degenerate and that America is its forerunner and carrier.

It is a New Society in which the automatic factory and the electronic eye are the symbols of an automatism of the spirit, in which the sources of genuine creativeness in the arts have dried up and popular culture casts its pall of deadly mediocrity over everything, in which government planning and control (even when held to a minimum) are bound to bring an Orwellian nightmare, in which men's minds are swayed by synthetic appeals provided by the public-relations firms ("engineers of consent"), in which the ranks of

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the sexual deviants have been swelled, in which alcoholism and drug addiction gain constantly, in which the family has crumbled, the old heroism is gone, honor is only a name and loyalty is something checked upon by hunters for dangerous thoughts.

The truth is that the crisis of society is real, and that in some respects I have mentioned (but by no means all) the sickness is palpable. One could spin out the indictment and multiply the counts, and what would remain is that the New Society is indeed a new one, and that men have been cast out of their old securities to stand on their own feet and make their own way, and have not yet discovered how to do it. When Graham Wallas, almost a half-century ago, described the new "Great Society" that was taking shape around him, he was drawing the implications of the Great Technology which was reweaving the social structure after its own image. He saw the intricate and fragile web of communication, and the division of labor which was projected from the factory into the society, and the new techniques for molding men's minds by the power of suggestion. Today, almost fifty years later, the process Wallas saw and described has been stretched so much farther that new concepts and dimensions are needed to grasp it.

The current tendency is to stress its pathology, to talk of its psychosis, and in fact—by making the focus of analysis the idea of the alienation of man from man—to deny that it is a society at all rather than an unhappy collection of atomistic and about-to-be-atomized individuals. Yet it seems a better approach to start with the fact that it is some kind of society, to ask what kind and what is its central principle.

I suspect that the clue lies again, as with Wallas, in the Great Technology, whose changes in America have been so rapid and continuous that Russell Davenport used for them the Trotzkyist phrase "Permanent Revolution." In America, at any rate, the technology is approaching a high degree of automation, which is to say that the basic problem of production has been solved. The problem of distribution, about which the Marxists thought there would be unresolvable class-conflicts, has worked out better than the theorists had expected. Man has been released—not only his time, but his energies and longings as well—for modes of cultivation and expression for which neither he nor his instruments and institutions are

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ready. The hackneyed way to say it is that he has been released for "leisure." The truer way would be to say that he has been released for thinking about what he shall do with his release. The New Society is new mainly in the sense that it is cluttered up with the new gadgets—automation, the big media of communication and entertainment, the new wealth and consumers' goods, the new ways of bridging space and filling time—which mark the end and beginning of an era. Actually it is a society that still is trying to use the old social forms for the new purposes now at hand.

The pathos of latter-day man in the New Society is that he hungers for personal fulfillment and for a sense of community with others, and he has been unable to attain either. Much of the reason for the spread of mental disease is that, with the problems of making a living less and less pressing, hungers have been awakened for making a *life* before the social means and the social wisdom have been found for satisfying them. I wish one could say that the psychosis of modern life had a single cause, for then one could prescribe a single cure for it. There is not even the solace of finding a good, whopping, satisfying historical parallel with even, let us say, imperial Rome in its stage of decline, degeneracy and collapse. Alas, not even the diatribes against the contemporary American family can draw much sustenance from the parallel. The problem in Rome was an aversion to marriage: the problem in America is a mysterious propensity for it. The problem in Rome was a declining birth rate: the problem in America is the "baby boom," not so much among the ignorant and feckless as among the literate and hopeful. It is true that the American family is a kind of child-oriented anarchy, that marriages come too early and divorces too frequently; but whatever its faults, they derive from the effort to use the principle of democracy within the structure of family authority, and to seek uncompromisingly within the family the happiness that latter-day man longs for. Surely neither of those propositions could have been made about Rome.

I use the family as illustration. Equally I could use the moral codes, sexual behavior, the quest for education and "culture," the idea of happiness. The point is certainly not that we have achieved the good society or the sane society or the happy one or the holy one or the rational one or the cohesive one or the fulfilled one.

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The point I am making is that latter-day man—if America is to be judged as the test—is trying to make an enormous leap. All along he has been *homo faber,* and in our generation he is reaching the heights of his skill as the fabulous artificer. But he has come to the end of that story, and now he wants to make a leap even riskier than the Daedalian one—the leap from *homo faber* to *homo felix,* from a concern with commodities to a concern with his own personality and its happiness, from adventures among markets to adventures among meanings.

It is in this sense that I speak of the "flowering" of latter-day man. He lives amidst an encompassing sense of doom, he has seen and experienced enough to make him weary of the garment of the earth and the tent of heaven and the body of his own flesh; within his New Society he is surrounded by automatism, battered by sounds and images hurled at him as a target, pressured toward conformity; he wanders lonely as an alienated cloud, roaming over a wilderness of commodities; he scarcely knows what to do with the wealth that his own contrivance has placed in his hands, and he is aghast at the destructive power he holds in his grasp. Yet amidst it all a surprising number of people are buoyant and hopeful, wanting more than anything else to pour meaning into the new molds of abundance that technology offers. This era of alienation, automation and looming radiation is exactly the time when more people are more eager than ever to learn how to get more enjoyment and meaning out of more life.

It is easy to mock them for their eagerness and perhaps their naïveté, or to mourn over their failures, but neither of these is the point. The question is not how wise or sophisticated they are, nor how much of that elusive commodity of "happiness" they are achieving. The massive fact is also the paradoxical one that such a flowering of energy and eagerness is taking place in so bleak an era. It may even lead us to ask whether a generation so intent on meanings and the discovery of identity in the individual life may not even manage the miracle of finding a way to nail down controls over atomic death.

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December

DOROTHY LEE RICHARDSON

I am coming into the winter season . . .
The season of illumination,
The season of snow;
Of merciless glow
On the pale field of reason;
Of cold desolation;
The uncompromising season
That I did not want to know.

Here is no cajoling spring
With her large vows, all,
Or most, to be broken;
No summer promise spoken
Loud—yet on the wing;
No shout of turncoat fall;
But white silence, to which cling
Truth's pure crystals: precious; small.

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The Present Human Condition

ERICH FROMM

AT THE CLOSE OF THE MIDDLE AGES, Western man seemed to be headed for the final fulfillment of his keenest dreams and visions. He freed himself from the authority of a totalitarian church, the weight of traditional thought, the geographical limitations of our but half-discovered globe. He built a new science which eventually has led to the release of hitherto unheard-of productive powers, and to the complete transformation of the material world. He created political systems which seem to guarantee the free and productive development of the individual; he reduced the time of work to such a level that man was free to enjoy hours of leisure to an extent his forefathers had hardly dreamed of.

Yet where are we today?

The danger of an all-destructive war hangs over the head of humanity, a danger which is by no means overcome by the spirit of Geneva prevalent at the time of this writing. But even if man's political representatives have enough sanity left to avoid a war, man's condition is far from the fulfillment of the hopes of the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

Man's character has been molded by the demands of the world he has built with his own hands. In the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, man's character orientation was essentially exploitative and hoarding. His course through life was determined by the desire to exploit others and to save his earnings to make further profit from them. In the twentieth century, man's character orientation is essentially a receptive and a marketing one. He is receptive in most of his leisure time. He is the eternal consumer; he "takes in" drink, food, cigarettes, lectures, sights, books, movies—all are con-

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sumed, swallowed. The world is one great object for his appetite, a big bottle, a big apple, a big breast. Man has become the suckler, the eternally expectant—and the eternally disappointed one.

If "privately," individually, modern man is a consumer, he is "publicly," in his active participation in his society, a trader. Our economic system is centered around the function of the market as determining the value of all commodities, and as the regulator of each one's share in the social product. Neither force nor tradition, as in previous periods of history, nor fraud or trickery govern man's economic activities. He is free to produce and to sell; market day is judgment day for the success of his efforts. Not only are commodities offered and sold on the market; labor itself has become a commodity, sold on the labor market under the same conditions of fair competition. But the market system has reached out farther than the economic sphere of commodities and labor. Man has transformed *himself* into a commodity, experiences his life as capital to be invested profitably; if he succeeds in this, he is "successful," and his life has meaning; if not, "he is a failure." His "value" lies in his salability, not in his human qualities of love and reason or in his artistic capacities. Hence his sense of his own value depends on extraneous factors, his success, the judgment of others. Hence, he is dependent on these others, and his security lies in conformity, in never being more than two feet away from the herd.

However, it is not only the market which determines modern man's "public" character. Another factor, though one closely related to the market function, is the mode of industrial production. Enterprises become bigger and bigger; the number of people employed by these enterprises as workers or clerks grows incessantly; ownership is separated from management, and the industrial giants are governed by a professional bureaucracy which is mainly interested in the smooth functioning and in the expansion of their enterprise, rather than in profit per se.

What kind of man, then, does our society need in order to function smoothly? It needs men who co-operate smoothly in large

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groups; who want to consume more and more, and whose tastes are standardized and can be easily influenced and anticipated. It needs men who feel free and independent, who do not feel subject to any authority or principle or conscience, yet are willing to be commanded, to do what is expected, to fit into the social machine without friction—men who can be guided without force, led without leaders, be prompted without any aim except the one to be on the move, to function, to go ahead. Modern capitalism has succeeded in producing this kind of man; he is the automaton, the alienated man. He is alienated in the sense that his acts and forces have become estranged from him; they stand above and against him, and rule him rather than being ruled by him. His life forces have flowed into things and institutions, and these things, having become idols, are not experienced as the result of his own efforts, but as something apart from him which he worships and to which he submits. Alienated man bows down before the works of his own hands. His idols represent his own life forces in an alienated form. Man does not experience himself as the active bearer of his own forces and riches, but as an impoverished "thing," dependent on other things—things outside himself, into which he has projected his living substance.

Man's social feelings are projected into the state. Just because he has made the state the embodiment of his own social feelings, he worships it and its symbols. He projects his sense of power, wisdom and courage into his leaders, and he worships them as his idols. As a worker, clerk or manager, modern man is alienated from his work. The worker has become an economic atom that dances to the tune of automatized management. He has no part in planning the work process, in its outcome; he is hardly ever in touch with the whole product. The manager, on the other hand, is in touch with the whole product, but he is alienated from it as something concrete and useful. His aim is to employ profitably the capital invested by others; the commodity is the abstractified embodiment of capital, not something which, as a concrete entity, matters to him. The manager has become a bureaucrat who handles things, figures and human beings as mere objects of his activity. Their

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manipulation is considered to be a concern with human relations, when actually one deals with the most inhuman relations—those between abstractified automatons.

Our consumption is equally alienated. It is determined by the advertising slogans, rather than by our palates, eyes or ears.

As a citizen, then, modern man is willing even to give his life for his fellow men; as a private individual, he is filled with an egotistical concern for himself. The meaninglessness and alienation of work result in a longing for complete laziness. Man hates his working life because it makes him feel a prisoner and a fraud. His ideal becomes absolute laziness, in which he will not have to make a move, where everything goes according to the Kodak slogan: "You press the button; we do the rest." This tendency is reinforced by the type of consumption necessary for the expansion of the inner market, leading to a principle which Huxley has very succinctly expressed in his *Brave New World*. One might epitomize the way many of us today have been conditioned from childhood with: "Never put off till tomorrow the fun you can have today." If I do not postpone the satisfaction of my wish (and I am conditioned only to wish for what I can get), I have no conflicts, no doubts; no decision has to be made; I am never alone with myself because I am always busy—either working or having fun. I have no need to be aware of myself as myself because I am constantly absorbed with consuming. I am a system of desires and satisfactions; I have to work in order to fulfill my desires, and these very desires are constantly stimulated and directed by the economic machine.

We claim that we pursue the aims of the Judaeo-Christian tradition, the love of God and of our neighbor. We are even told that we are going through a period of a promising religious renaissance. Nothing could be further from the truth. We use symbols belonging to a genuinely religious tradition, and transform them into formulas serving the purposes of alienated man. Religion becomes a self-help device for increasing one's own powers for success. God becomes a partner in business. The "Power of Positive Thinking" is the successor of "How to Make Friends and Influence People."

Love of man is a rare phenomenon too. Automatons do not love; alienated men do not care. What is praised by love experts and

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marriage counselors is a team relationship between two people who manipulate each other with the right techniques, and whose love is essentially a haven from an otherwise unbearable aloneness, an egotism *à deux*.

What, then, can be expected from the future? If one ignores those thoughts produced by our wishes, one has to admit, I am afraid, that the most likely possibility is still that the discrepancy between technical intelligence and reason will lead the world into an atomic war. The most likely outcome of such a war is the destruction of industrial civilization and the regression of the world to a primitive agrarian level. Or, if the destruction should not prove to be as thorough as many specialists in the field believe, the result will be the necessity for the victor to organize and dominate the whole world. This could be realized only by a centralized state based on force, and it would make little difference whether Moscow or Washington would be the seat of government.

But, unfortunately, even the avoidance of war does not in itself promise a bright future. In the development of both capitalism and communism as we can visualize them in the next fifty or a hundred years, the process of automatization and alienation will proceed. Both these systems are developing managerial societies in which inhabitants are well fed and well clad, having their wishes satisfied, and not having wishes that cannot be satisfied; automatons, who follow without force, who are guided without leaders, who make machines that act like men and produce men who act like machines; men whose reason deteriorates while their intelligence rises, thus creating the dangerous situation of equipping man with the greatest material power without the wisdom to use it.

In spite of increasing production and comfort, man loses more and more the sense of self, feels that his life is meaningless, even though such feeling is largely unconscious. In the nineteenth century the problem was that *God is dead*; in the twentieth century the problem is that *man is dead*. In the nineteenth century inhumanity meant cruelty; in the twentieth century it means schizoid self-alienation. The danger of the past was that men became slaves.

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The danger of the future is that men may become robots. True enough, robots do not rebel. But given man's nature, robots cannot live and remain sane. They become "golems"; they will destroy their world and themselves because they cannot stand any longer the boredom of a meaningless life.

What is the alternative to war and robotism? Most fundamentally, perhaps, the answer could be given by reversing Emerson's phrase: "Things are in the saddle and ride mankind," and saying: "Put mankind in the saddle so that it rides things." This is another way of saying that man must overcome the alienation which makes him an impotent and irrational worshiper of idols. This means, if we remain in the psychological sphere, that he must overcome the marketing and receptive orientation which dominates him now, and emerge into the mature, productive orientation. He must acquire again a sense of self, he must be capable of loving, and of making his work a meaningful and concrete activity. He must emerge from a materialistic orientation and arrive at a level where spiritual values, love, truth and justice truly become of ultimate concern to him. But any attempt to change only one section of life, the human or spiritual one, is doomed to failure. In fact, any progress which occurs only in one sphere is destructive of progress in all spheres. The gospel concerned only with spiritual salvation led to the establishment of the Roman Catholic Church; the French Revolution, with its exclusive concern with political reform, led to Robespierre and Napoleon; socialism, insofar as it was only concerned with economic change, led to Stalinism.

Applying this principle of simultaneous change to all spheres of life, we must think of those economic and political changes which are necessary in order to overcome the psychological fact of alienation. We must retain the industrial method. But we must decentralize work and the state so as to give them *human* proportions, and permit centralization only to an optimal point which is necessary because of the requirements of industry. In the economic sphere we need co-management of all who work in an enterprise to permit their active and responsible participation. The new forms for such participation can be found. In the political sphere, we must return to the town meeting by creating thousands of

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small face-to-face groups which are well informed, which discuss, and whose decisions are integrated in a new "lower house." A cultural renaissance must combine work education for the young, adult education, and a new system of popular art and secular ritual throughout the whole nation.

Just as primitive man was helpless before the natural forces, modern man is helpless before the social and economic forces created by himself. He worships the works of his own hands, bowing to the new idols, yet swearing by the name of the God who commanded him to destroy all idols. Man can protect himself from the consequences of his own madness only by creating a sane society which conforms with the needs of man, needs which are rooted in the very conditions of his existence: a society in which man relates to man lovingly, in which he is rooted in bonds of brotherliness and solidarity, rather than in the ties of blood and soil; a society which gives him the possibility of transcending nature by creating rather than by destroying; one in which everyone gains a sense of self by experiencing himself as the subject of his powers rather than by conformity; one in which a system of orientation and devotion exists without man's needing to distort reality and to worship idols.

Building such a society means taking the next step; it means the end of "humanoid" history, the phase in which man has not become fully human. It does not mean the "end of days," the "completion," the state of perfect harmony in which no conflicts or problems confront man. On the contrary, it is man's fate that his existence is beset by contradictions which he is impelled to solve without ever solving them. When he has overcome the primitive state of human sacrifice, be it in the ritualistic form of the Aztecs or in the secular form of war; when he has been able to regulate his relationship with nature reasonably instead of blindly; when things have truly become his servants rather than his idols—he will be confronted with the truly human conflicts and problems. He will have to be adventuresome, courageous, imaginative, capable of suffering and of joy, but his powers will be in the service of life, and not in the service of death. The new phase of human history, if it comes to pass, will be a beginning, not an end.

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The Raft

DONALD J. LLOYD

We are adrift on a broad ocean that has no shores:
Nights, the air freezes us and we chill.
Days, the sun burns. Our ankles are swollen,
Our wrists are raw with the sea water
And our watches have stopped. We are not quite sure when.
They kept good time, but the water got at them and they stopped.
Now we often say,
It would be nice to know what time it is.
But it doesn't matter. We're not going anyplace.

We wish we could touch one another, in love and despair
Draw close and feel each other's bodies.
But our hands are raw, and our backs. We were wrapped up
In bundles of sore skin before we were introduced.
We are afraid of being driven off. It is too bad.
We have it in us to be great lovers.

We wish for someone to say *put up the mast*
Or *pull down the sail* or *everybody get over there.*
But we sit still in our places and watch
The endless whispering movement of the waves.
Often we quarrel.

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It is not food we lack. We have food.
Nor drink. We have drink.
Nor endurance. We can endure.
Nor skill. We built this raft with our hands
And we trust it. It is all we can trust.

We sit with our feet in the water and we think
How nice to slip over the side, into the next great wave
Or the next—a big soft gentle green one—
And give ourselves to it, sliding down down down
Into a dim lucid world where there is no cold wind
Nor hot sun. But we don't. Anyway
How do you pick one wave from another?
One long green wave from another?

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The Ecology of Man

F. FRASER DARLING

PROPHECY IS A DANGEROUS ART. If the prophet is right, he may find himself at the stake; if he is wrong, he is a laughing stock; and if history has not yet proved him right or wrong, he is eating out his own heart because no one will heed. And how much prophecy is wish fulfillment? More than we care to admit.

The prophet should have no enthusiasm or optimism, neither should his proper disillusionment have made him a cynic. Prophecy itself needs analysis: Is it the result of clairvoyance, insight or cold reason? Are we instruments, poets or scientists called upon to dream the future? We are playing a game of chance in public, each with a skill of his own which may make the game worth watching.

This issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR will age like a good claret which, opened half a century hence, will give an evening of joyousness and good conversation, a mellowness which will restrain the laughter of derision to an indulgent smile, and aid the perception of those passages of truth which will surely be found within these covers.

This essay comprises the estimate of an ecologist and conservationist who, like all his tribe, thinks a good deal about the future as a result of being interested in tracing process. Also, as a student of animal behavior who has groped into the unexplored country of human ecology, he has apprehended some of the quirks of our species which have origins and potentialities both heartening and frightening. He emerges as an unembittered pessimist on the subject of man's future. Not that this is of much consequence. He might be wrong, but what is more important, he *could* be wrong if the human mind changed its course so very little. After all, ethos is molded and modified ultimately by the very few, but in this

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connection, ethos and anthropological culture should not be mistaken for the same thing. Culture is more bovine than ethos. We live in a world of quickening communication, a fact as important as, or more so than, the speed of technical development. Communication as opposed to communications is a matter of interchange, of challenge and response in the human spirit.

The ecologist, dealing with the relations of organisms to each other and to their environment, is studying the dynamics of the animate world; the conservationist counts heads and mouths and feet, and balances the wealth of resources and rate of regeneration against past, present and future consumption. The very word *conservation* as it is now understood is not very old; its history may be found in the lives of two Americans, Gifford Pinchot and Theodore Roosevelt, and perhaps their inspiration was in George P. Marsh's remarkable book of 1874, *The Earth as Modified by Human Action.*

Pinchot was concerned with forests, Roosevelt with the more obvious and attractive wild animals of the American wilderness. Their first reaction in the face of apprehended danger was to stop the felling and stop the killing, but both were wise enough to know that protection by absolute embargo was unlikely to work. "Conservation through wise use" was Roosevelt's phrase, a good one which has lasted, though it is doubtful whether he could have defined exactly what he meant. He might have said "restrained use," but that would take us no farther. What constitutes wise or restrained use of any resource? We do not know. Before we can answer such a question we must know details of input and output, of metabolism of complicated animate systems, and of our own growth. What was reasonable in human demands half a century ago would, in general, be less than reasonable and restrained now. There are more human beings, there are new land uses; and such is Western man's faith in the idea of growth and expanding economy that the standard of living accepted as desirable for himself and the world population has risen immeasurably. Roosevelt had little understanding of yardsticks, but he could prepare the way by getting an idea launched into human consciousness.

It needed a series of drought years, a dust bowl and another

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Roosevelt to enlarge the scope of conservation and show the urgency for a conservation policy. The thirties were no time for philosophical argument: the blowing away and washing away of soil had to be stopped quickly; check dams and contour farming were the technical stopgaps for an emergency. But they were not the whole of conservation. The detached ecologist may even wonder whether the technicians of those brave years perhaps deflected and retarded investigation into the fundamental processes of biological communities.

The ecologist was not in the front line thirty years ago fighting for survival, as were the designers of check dams who had so little time to think. But behind the technicians were hosts of doom men, the writers. They had a wonderful time and did good work also, communicating and making an impact on educated consciousness. Just now they need to sit back, take stock and possibly go to school again, for the world is tending to get tired of their constantly crying "Wolf!" The wolf is coming all right, but the world citizen wants to know the animal's movements and behavior in detail before he either runs away or bands with others to kill the wolf.

Here, I think, will be one of the major scientific developments of the coming half century: a concentrated investigation in ecological terms into what constitutes the running economy of complicated biological systems or communities-in-process. What is a forest? It is certainly much more than an aggregation of trees. There are usually several kinds of trees; each of them makes its own demands on the soil; each has its own kind of shade; each feeds its own group of tiny but not inconsiderable creatures. There is a shrub layer and a field layer of herbaceous plants; there is a layer of litter and mold and of deeper mineral soil tunneled by root fibers; and the dead root fibers are tunneled by unseen, almost unknown, mites. Each layer from the forest canopy to the deeper soil is occupied by its own association of living organisms; each has its niche and each is doing a job in the conversion of matter, advancing the circulation of energy which for each biological community has its own pulse in health.

I can imagine someone wondering what all this has to do with the future of mankind in a world in which atomic power is almost obsolete, before it has been properly harnessed for its century or

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so of service until solar energy becomes the main source of power. Am I not getting off the mark or losing a sense of proportion? I do not think so. I am firmly of the opinion that man is not paramount on the planet by divine right, though he may be apical in many ways to the pyramid of life. I do not see a planet concreted over its land surfaces to provide living and factory space for an immense human population nourishing itself and supplying all its needs synthetically. Human life is going to depend on plant life for a long time yet, and in far more ways than its value as an efficient conversion agent. Rather do I see that, in a world losing so many natural habitats by insidious as well as direct attack, scientific opinion is going to influence governments to undertake these fundamental ecological investigations as part of a survival policy.

What makes a forest a continuum? We do not know, but the problem is just one of many that are realized to be urgent. A forest, we have learned, cannot be re-created merely by planting trees. We know a good deal more than we knew ten years ago, and governments are readier to support the research which needs even as yet to find how many organisms are involved in the circulatory system of a natural forest. It is clear enough that a healthy natural forest builds up natural wealth and does not dissipate it. One that has been disturbed and exploited may be losing capital. How? The answer which can show exactly the difference between these two energy cycles, the points at which there are slowings down of conversion, or bottlenecks caused by the chance extinction of a few plants or invertebrate animal organisms, is the stuff on which conservation policy in the future will depend.

The uncritical advocacy of a nebulous conservation program has had its day. We are going forward to determine what may be called the physiology of the planet's eco-systems. This long-term research will ultimately change our habits of land use, particularly on what are called "marginal lands," where in the past and even in the present there has been agricultural effort of the traumatic kind which has caused sudden or gradual deterioration. Half a century hence we shall be farming our good lands better and more intensively and, if the population situation does not quite blind us, the marginal lands will be in course of repair to the state where they can yield that which nature allows them to produce.

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The United States has already realized this necessity in some measure in that millions of acres of once homesteaded or ranched lands have been taken back into federal control. Yet the homesteading philosophy dies so hard in the United States that sub-marginal land is still being sold in small acreages in Alaska, where man's domesticated animals and the plants of agriculture cannot really compete efficiently with the wild ones already in that environment, nor with the wholeness of the delicately tuned forest biome of sub-Arctic Alaska.

In Britain, where a good soil and an almost unique climate have allowed much of England to be deforested and the eco-system to be deflected to rich grassland and an abundant agriculture, we have had to learn, dimly as yet, that the marginal lands cannot be shocked and bulldozed as can the good lands. The Pennine hills are a desert, the southern uplands of Scotland are wearing thin after five hundred years of sheep grazing, and the rougher, vaster, more magnificent Highlands are in a devastated state after a much lesser period of what was thought to be an estimable land use.

The establishment of the Nature Conservancy in Britain is a world beacon in the new way of thought. The general public may still be thinking that the Conservancy and its nature reserves are "protecting nature and all that," and how nice it is to think that deer and eagles and wild geese are being saved from extinction. The Conservancy may be doing all that, but it is unique in its quiet, difficult program of long-term research into the nature and processes of animal and plant communities. Its work is part of the blueprint for human survival on a misused planet where the human species is in danger of running to plague proportions and following false trails in evolution that would lead to extinction.

Marsh and Pinchot and Roosevelt did the pioneering of an idea; men like Aldo Leopold disciplined it, gave it a coherent scientific quality and finally illuminated it to an ethic. Paul Sears, Fairfield Osborn and William Vogt have made the world more conservation-conscious, and bodies such as the United States Forest Service and the British Nature Consersvancy are bringing to bear the necessary refinements of scientific method. The young naturalist of today should feel like the nascent Adam of Michelangelo's drawing. We are at a tremendous moment in the formulation and fusing of ideas.

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So much for natural history and human survival: there will also be a concomitant intellectual and spiritual trend. Physicists and biologists are drawing nearer in their attitudes of mind; both are influencing philosophical thought to a greater extent than ever before. The burden of Aristotelian scholasticism is being shed slowly, and so is the attitude of mind that has persisted longer than the philosophy. What a slander it has been on Aristotle, that good observer and naturalist, all these years, to have that wooden, horse-minded scholasticism associated with his name! It is not without significance that philosophy is coming to be called logic, for the new physics and biology do cause people to work from insight to facts and from facts to philosophy, rather than to indulge in intellectual chess.

Our past attitudes to the animate world around us obviously have been much influenced by religions, and as the Western races have spread their attitudes and methods over so much of the planet, the Judaic origins of the Christian religion are important as mainsprings. Despite Scriptural authority to the contrary, it is most probable that Judaic man emerging to monotheism made God in his own image; the chosen people, having thereby pulled themselves up by their own bootstraps, are enjoined to inherit the earth and multiply. The European races jumped on this bandwagon long ago and became convinced that the earth was made for man and that all that lived and moved therein was subject to him—Me and God, as it were, and the rest of animate creation nowhere.

I have found nothing in Christ's teaching to impress the early Judaic view of dominance and right over animate creation (though there seems little enough, either, in the New Testament to change such a view except the beautiful and constant call to compassion) but, nevertheless, the Christian religion as it has developed and segmented seems to hold quite firmly the view that man and the rest of animate creation are in different relations to God. Though religion may lapse, basic attitudes derived therefrom do not. I believe that this dualism has been disastrous in its effects on the planet through the medium of human behavior. How strange it is that of all races on earth, only one tiny culture, the Hopi Indians of Arizona, should not only have behaved in such a manner as to have achieved conservation of habitat (for a few other cultures

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have also done that), but have raised this behavior to a vigorous intellectual and socio-religious principle in a holistic philosophy. Methods of philosophical formulation between us and them are so different as to hinder free communication, but the time may come.

In addition to the dualism of religious origin, there has also been the philosophical dualism of Descartes: mind and matter. Even when we do not believe it any more, our distorted intellectual muscles keep pulling us back to the condition of dislocation of the old way of thought. The causal-analytic method of science stinks of it, though we must all accept the discipline of the causal-analytic method in some measure. Whitehead freed us in part from the tyranny of our own abstraction in his *Science and the Modern World*, bringing us rationally to an organic philosophy. Ecology, as the science of biological communities and their social as well as physical environments, inevitably leads the investigator to think in terms of individuals and species within a context of others. A social animal is a member of a group, and the group life and behavior is an essential part of the environment of the individual. A species does not stand alone but is a member of a sustaining community of species. The humming bird and the flower are indivisible in nature. What is more, these natural integrated communities are creative; their wholes are greater than the sum of their parts. The philosophy to be derived from ecological study extends on that of Whitehead. Some ecologists, such as John Phillips and Alfred Emerson, have been led to the concept of a complex- or supra-organism, the community having its own resilience, power to reconstitute and regenerate, and some capacity to withstand change. But it seems doubtful whether it is necessary to go beyond the earlier terms of Clements, of biotic community and biome.

Man, by his great powers of adaptation, can be and is a member of many biotic communities from Tropic to Arctic, but civilized man has tended to remove himself from the community and be predatory upon it; in other words, it is the familiar story of exploitation of natural resources or what we have so often called "development." Nevertheless, the organic philosophy has gained much ground and has linked up with the ecological concepts of biotic community. The problem is seen quite clearly now: How

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can we return to be members of biotic communities without going back to being savages? How can we prevent civilization from being self-destructive? We have had half-bakes from Rousseau onward who have "gone back to nature," and fine asses they have made of themselves! The ecological philosphy of community is unlikely to put straws in anyone's hair or send him out to eat grass. It would ask for knowledge before action, and the knowledge that would accurately foretell consequences. That knowledge would allow us actively to repair and rebuild natural communities which we see have creative and accretive properties. Thereafter our exploitation could be controlled so that we should not cut into capital, not go past the community's power to reconstitute and regenerate. This would be conservation through wise use, based on understanding of the physiology of biotic communities which constitute our environment.

This philosophy is being more generally grasped, and with it the ethic of conservation that does not consider any species or community ours by right to exploit for gain. This ethic holds centrally a reverence for life, not the fanatical regard of the Jain who looks where he treads at each step lest he should kill some small creature (apparently oblivious of the fact that there are still smaller creatures he cannot see), but that poise and judgment which would kill without sentimentality where it was necessary to kill, and not kill for amusement or in such a manner as would damage the biome to which the animal belonged. It is the reverence of a mankind that loves through understanding, the species unique in consciousness and unique in power to evolve creatively.

This attitude identifies man with nature without underestimating his uniqueness and lifts the deep neurosis of Western man who has removed himself from the biotic community and therefore—however arrogant he may be—walks in fear. This kind of man is like the Priest of Nemi, the King of the Wood, living in unrest because he knows not the day when the blow will fall. The ecological attitude supports the philosophy which would admit man to be the species of greatest power on the planet; and man, by that power, accepts the role of servant in conscious maintenance and care of the planet's animate resources.

The organic and animate wealth of the world was enormous

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when man attained to consciousness. One can scarcely question the rightness and common sense of his having used some of that wealth to civilize himself; it had to be done. But man is still adolescent as a conscious species and he is faced, again in full consciousness, with the choice of whether he shall mature into a species loving his world or remain irresponsibly wielding his new toy of an expanding economy. This problem-and-choice situation has never been more cogently and sincerely stated than by Samuel Ordway in his *Resources and the American Dream.*

I have said that this philosophy and ethic are being more generally grasped, but it is not nearly so powerful as the conviction that greater production of all kinds is the best possible course to follow, regardless of what is happening to resources. I began this essay as an unembittered pessimist because I cannot see mankind making the change in the coming half century. There have been changes for better and for worse in the past fifty years, and the general position is worse than it was fifty years ago. Nevertheless, the change for the better has been made before and it could be effective. At this point, the prophet hesitates and is probably lost.

As I see it, the political nature of man is unique in the animal world. His sense of community is entirely different from the unconscious mutualism and co-operation of an ecological community. Biotic communities of marsh and desert are not jealous of each other; each occurs because of limitations and opportunities of environment, and each represents a degree of circulation of energy which the environmental conditions allow. Human political communities create some quite illogical loyalties and bolster themselves against real or imagined rivals, thereby interfering enormously with life and leisure as it could be experienced. A conservation ethic derived from an understanding of natural communities of living things, admitting the influence of a Greco-Christian, neo-Platonic philosophy, could play its part in dissolving political barriers and nationalisms—as they certainly must be dissolved if humanity is to survive—but it is doubtful whether we shall get much farther toward such an end within the coming half century. We are nowhere near ready for it in mind; at least, the present essayist is not.

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Freedom and the Control of Men

B. F. SKINNER

THE SECOND HALF OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY may be remembered for its solution of a curious problem. Although Western democracy created the conditions responsible for the rise of modern science, it is now evident that it may never fully profit from that achievement. The so-called "democratic philosophy" of human behavior to which it also gave rise is increasingly in conflict with the application of the methods of science to human affairs. Unless this conflict is somehow resolved, the ultimate goals of democracy may be long deferred.

I

Just as biographers and critics look for external influences to account for the traits and achievements of the men they study, so science ultimately explains behavior in terms of "causes" or conditions which lie beyond the individual himself. As more and more causal relations are demonstrated, a practical corollary becomes difficult to resist: it should be possible to *produce* behavior according to plan simply by arranging the proper conditions. Now, among the specifications which might reasonably be submitted to a behavioral technology are these: Let men be happy, informed, skillful, well behaved and productive.

This immediate practical implication of a science of behavior has a familiar ring, for it recalls the doctrine of human perfectibility of eighteenth- and nineteenth-century humanism. A science of man

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shares the optimism of that philosophy and supplies striking support for the working faith that men can build a better world and, through it, better men. The support comes just in time, for there has been little optimism of late among those who speak from the traditional point of view. Democracy has become "realistic," and it is only with some embarrassment that one admits today to perfectionistic or utopian thinking.

The earlier temper is worth considering, however. History records many foolish and unworkable schemes for human betterment, but almost all the great changes in our culture which we now regard as worthwhile can be traced to perfectionistic philosophies. Governmental, religious, educational, economic and social reforms follow a common pattern. Someone believes that a change in a cultural practice—for example, in the rules of evidence in a court of law, in the characterization of man's relation to God, in the way children are taught to read and write, in permitted rates of interest, or in minimal housing standards—will improve the condition of men: by promoting justice, permitting men to seek salvation more effectively, increasing the literacy of a people, checking an inflationary trend, or improving public health and family relations, respectively. The underlying hypothesis is always the same: that a different physical or cultural environment will make a different and better man.

The scientific study of behavior not only justifies the general pattern of such proposals; it promises new and better hypotheses. The earliest cultural practices must have originated in sheer accidents. Those which strengthened the group survived with the group in a sort of natural selection. As soon as men began to propose and carry out changes in practice for the sake of possible consequences, the evolutionary process must have accelerated. The simple practice of making changes must have had survival value. A further acceleration is now to be expected. As laws of behavior are more precisely stated, the changes in the environment required to bring about a given effect may be more clearly specified. Conditions which have been neglected because their effects were slight or unlooked for may be shown to be relevant. New conditions may actually be

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created, as in the discovery and synthesis of drugs which affect behavior.

This is no time, then, to abandon notions of progress, improvement or, indeed, human perfectibility. The simple fact is that man is able, and now as never before, to lift himself by his own bootstraps. In achieving control of the world of which he is a part, he may learn at last to control himself.

II

Timeworn objections to the planned improvement of cultural practices are already losing much of their force. Marcus Aurelius was probably right in advising his readers to be content with a haphazard amelioration of mankind. "Never hope to realize Plato's republic," he sighed, ". . . for who can change the opinions of men? And without a change of sentiments what can you make but reluctant slaves and hypocrites?" He was thinking, no doubt, of contemporary patterns of control based upon punishment or the threat of punishment which, as he correctly observed, breed only reluctant slaves of those who submit and hypocrites of those who discover modes of evasion. But we need not share his pessimism, for the opinions of men can be changed. The techniques of indoctrination which were being devised by the early Christian Church at the very time Marcus Aurelius was writing are relevant, as are some of the techniques of psychotherapy and of advertising and public relations. Other methods suggested by recent scientific analyses leave little doubt of the matter.

The study of human behavior also answers the cynical complaint that there is a plain "cussedness" in man which will always thwart efforts to improve him. We are often told that men do not want to be changed, even for the better. Try to help them, and they will outwit you and remain happily wretched. Dostoevsky claimed to see some plan in it. "Out of sheer ingratitude," he complained, or possibly boasted, "man will play you a dirty trick, just to prove that men are still men and not the keys of a piano. . . . And even if you could prove that a man is only a piano key, he would still do some-

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thing out of sheer perversity—he would create destruction and chaos—just to gain his point. . . . And if all this could in turn be analyzed and prevented by predicting that it would occur, then man would deliberately go mad to prove his point." This is a conceivable neurotic reaction to inept control. A few men may have shown it, and many have enjoyed Dostoevsky's statement because they tend to show it. But that such perversity is a fundamental reaction of the human organism to controlling conditions is sheer nonsense.

So is the objection that we have no way of knowing what changes to make even though we have the necessary techniques. That is one of the great hoaxes of the century—a sort of booby trap left behind in the retreat before the advancing front of science. Scientists themselves have unsuspectingly agreed that there are two kinds of useful propositions about nature—facts and value judgments—and that science must confine itself to "what is," leaving "what ought to be" to others. But with what special sort of wisdom is the non-scientist endowed? Science is only effective knowing, no matter who engages in it. Verbal behavior proves upon analysis to be composed of many different types of utterances, from poetry and exhortation to logic and factual description, but these are not all equally useful in talking about cultural practices. We may classify useful propositions according to the degrees of confidence with which they may be asserted. Sentences about nature range from highly probable "facts" to sheer guesses. In general, future events are less likely to be correctly described than past. When a scientist talks about a projected experiment, for example, he must often resort to statements having only a moderate likelihood of being correct; he calls them hypotheses.

Designing a new cultural pattern is in many ways like designing an experiment. In drawing up a new constitution, outlining a new educational program, modifying a religious doctrine, or setting up a new fiscal policy, many statements must be quite tentative. We cannot be sure that the practices we specify will have the consequences we predict, or that the consequences will reward our efforts. This is in the nature of such proposals. They are not value

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judgments—they are guesses. To confuse and delay the improvement of cultural practices by quibbling about the word *improve* is itself not a useful practice. Let us agree, to start with, that health is better than illness, wisdom better than ignorance, love better than hate, and productive energy better than neurotic sloth.

Another familiar objection is the "political problem." Though we know what changes to make and how to make them, we still need to control certain relevant conditions, but these have long since fallen into the hands of selfish men who are not going to relinquish them for such purposes. Possibly we shall be permitted to develop areas which at the moment seem unimportant, but at the first signs of success the strong men will move in. This, it is said, has happened to Christianity, democracy and communism. There will always be men who are fundamentally selfish and evil, and in the long run innocent goodness cannot have its way. The only evidence here is historical, and it may be misleading. Because of the way in which physical science developed, history could until very recently have "proved" that the unleashing of the energy of the atom was quite unlikely, if not impossible. Similarly, because of the order in which processes in human behavior have become available for purposes of control, history may seem to prove that power will probably be appropriated for selfish purposes. The first techniques to be discovered fell almost always to strong, selfish men. History led Lord Acton to believe that power corrupts, but he had probably never encountered absolute power, certainly not in all its forms, and had no way of predicting its effect.

An optimistic historian could defend a different conclusion. The principle that if there are not enough men of good will in the world the first step is to create more seems to be gaining recognition. The Marshall Plan (as originally conceived), Point Four, the offer of atomic materials to power-starved countries—these may or may not be wholly new in the history of international relations, but they suggest an increasing awareness of the power of governmental good will. They are proposals to make certain changes in the environments of men for the sake of consequences which should be rewarding for all concerned. They do not exemplify a

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disinterested generosity, but an interest which is the interest of everyone. We have not yet seen Plato's philosopher-king, and may not want to, but the gap between real and utopian government is closing.

III

But we are not yet in the clear, for a new and unexpected obstacle has arisen. With a world of their own making almost within reach, men of good will have been seized with distaste for their achievement. They have uneasily rejected opportunities to apply the techniques and findings of science in the service of men, and as the import of effective cultural design has come to be understood, many of them have voiced an outright refusal to have any part in it. Science has been challenged before when it has encroached upon institutions already engaged in the control of human behavior; but what are we to make of benevolent men, with no special interests of their own to defend, who nevertheless turn against the very means of reaching long-dreamed-of goals?

What is being rejected, of course, is the scientific conception of man and his place in nature. So long as the findings and methods of science are applied to human affairs only in a sort of remedial patchwork, we may continue to hold any view of human nature we like. But as the use of science increases, we are forced to accept the theoretical structure with which science represents its facts. The difficulty is that this structure is clearly at odds with the traditional democratic conception of man. Every discovery of an event which has a part in shaping a man's behavior seems to leave so much the less to be credited to the man himself; and as such explanations become more and more comprehensive, the contribution which may be claimed by the individual himself appears to approach zero. Man's vaunted creative powers, his original accomplishments in art, science and morals, his capacity to choose and our right to hold him responsible for the consequences of his choice —none of these is conspicuous in this new self-portrait. Man, we once believed, was free to express himself in art, music and literature, to inquire into nature, to seek salvation in his own way. He

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could initiate action and make spontaneous and capricious changes of course. Under the most extreme duress some sort of choice remained to him. He could resist any effort to control him, though it might cost him his life. But science insists that action is initiated by forces impinging upon the individual, and that caprice is only another name for behavior for which we have not yet found a cause.

In attempting to reconcile these views it is important to note that the traditional democratic conception was not designed as a description in the scientific sense but as a philosophy to be used in setting up and maintaining a governmental process. It arose under historical circumstances and served political purposes apart from which it cannot be properly understood. In rallying men against tyranny it was necessary that the individual be strengthened, that he be taught that he had rights and could govern himself. To give the common man a new conception of his worth, his dignity, and his power to save himself, both here and hereafter, was often the only resource of the revolutionist. When democratic principles were put into practice, the same doctrines were used as a working formula. This is exemplified by the notion of personal responsibility in Anglo-American law. All governments make certain forms of punishment contingent upon certain kinds of acts. In democratic countries these contingencies are expressed by the notion of responsible choice. But the notion may have no meaning under governmental practices formulated in other ways and would certainly have no place in systems which did not use punishment.

The democratic philosophy of human nature is determined by certain political exigencies and techniques, not by the goals of democracy. But exigencies and techniques change; and a conception which is not supported for its accuracy as a likeness—is not, indeed, rooted in fact at all—may be expected to change too. No matter how effective we judge current democratic practices to be, how highly we value them or how long we expect them to survive, they are almost certainly not the *final* form of government. The philosophy of human nature which has been useful in implementing them is also almost certainly not the last word. The ultimate achievement of democracy may be long deferred unless we empha-

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size the real aims rather than the verbal devices of democratic thinking. A philosophy which has been appropriate to one set of political exigencies will defeat its purpose if, under other circumstances, it prevents us from applying to human affairs the science of man which probably nothing but democracy itself could have produced.

IV

Perhaps the most crucial part of our democratic philosophy to be reconsidered is our attitude toward freedom—or its reciprocal, the control of human behavior. We do not oppose all forms of control because it is "human nature" to do so. The reaction is not characteristic of all men under all conditions of life. It is an attitude which has been carefully engineered, in large part by what we call the "literature" of democracy. With respect to some methods of control (for example, the threat of force), very little engineering is needed, for the techniques or their immediate consequences are objectionable. Society has suppressed these methods by branding them "wrong," "illegal" or "sinful." But to encourage these attitudes toward objectionable forms of control, it has been necessary to disguise the real nature of certain indispensable techniques, the commonest examples of which are education, moral discourse, and persuasion. The actual procedures appear harmless enough. They consist of supplying information, presenting opportunities for action, pointing out logical relationships, appealing to reason or "enlightened understanding," and so on. Through a masterful piece of misrepresentation, the illusion is fostered that these procedures do not involve the control of behavior; at most, they are simply ways of "getting someone to change his mind." But analysis not only reveals the presence of well-defined behavioral processes, it demonstrates a kind of control no less inexorable, though in some ways more acceptable, than the bully's threat of force.

Let us suppose that someone in whom we are interested is acting unwisely—he is careless in the way he deals with his friends, he drives too fast, or he holds his golf club the wrong way. We could

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probably help him by issuing a series of commands: don't nag, don't drive over sixty, don't hold your club that way. Much less objectionable would be "an appeal to reason." We could show him how people are affected by his treatment of them, how accident rates rise sharply at higher speeds, how a particular grip on the club alters the way the ball is struck and corrects a slice. In doing so we resort to verbal mediating devices which emphasize and support certain "contingencies of reinforcement"—that is, certain relations between behavior and its consequences—which strengthen the behavior we wish to set up. The same consequences would possibly set up the behavior without our help, and they eventually take control no matter which form of help we give. The appeal to reason has certain advantages over the authoritative command. A threat of punishment, no matter how subtle, generates emotional reactions and tendencies to escape or revolt. Perhaps the controllee merely "feels resentment" at being made to act in a given way, but even that is to be avoided. When we "appeal to reason," he "feels freer to do as he pleases." The fact is that we have exerted *less* control than in using a threat; since other conditions may contribute to the result, the effect may be delayed or, possibly in a given instance, lacking. But if we have worked a change in his behavior at all, it is because we have altered relevant environmental conditions, and the processes we have set in motion are just as real and just as inexorable, if not as comprehensive, as in the most authoritative coercion.

"Arranging an opportunity for action" is another example of disguised control. The power of the negative form has already been exposed in the analysis of censorship. Restriction of opportunity is recognized as far from harmless. As Ralph Barton Perry said in an article which appeared in the Spring, 1953, *Pacific Spectator*, "Whoever determines what alternatives shall be made known to man controls what that man shall choose *from*. He is deprived of freedom in proportion as he is denied access to *any* ideas, or is confined to any range of ideas short of the totality of relevant possibilities." But there is a positive side as well. When we present a relevant state of affairs, we increase the likelihood that a given form

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of behavior will be emitted. To the extent that the probability of action has changed, we have made a definite contribution. The teacher of history controls a student's behavior (or, if the reader prefers, "deprives him of freedom") just as much in *presenting* historical facts as in suppressing them. Other conditions will no doubt affect the student, but the contribution made to his behavior by the presentation of material is fixed and, within its range, irresistible.

The methods of education, moral discourse, and persuasion are acceptable not because they recognize the freedom of the individual or his right to dissent, but because they make only *partial* contributions to the control of his behavior. The freedom they recognize is freedom from a more coercive form of control. The dissent which they tolerate is the possible effect of other determiners of action. Since these sanctioned methods are frequently ineffective, we have been able to convince ourselves that they do not represent control at all. When they show too much strength to permit disguise, we give them other names and suppress them as energetically as we suppress the use of force. Education grown too powerful is rejected as propaganda or "brain-washing," while really effective persuasion is decried as "undue influence," "demagoguery," "seduction," and so on.

If we are not to rely solely upon accident for the innovations which give rise to cultural evolution, we must accept the fact that some kind of control of human behavior is inevitable. We cannot use good sense in human affairs unless someone engages in the design and construction of environmental conditions which affect the behavior of men. Environmental changes have always been the condition for the improvement of cultural patterns, and we can hardly use the more effective methods of science without making changes on a grander scale. We are all controlled by the world in which we live, and part of that world has been and will be constructed by men. The question is this: Are we to be controlled by accident, by tyrants, or by ourselves in effective cultural design?

The danger of the misuse of power is possibly greater than ever. It is not allayed by disguising the facts. We cannot make wise decisions if we continue to pretend that human behavior is not con-

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trolled, or if we refuse to engage in control when valuable results might be forthcoming. Such measures weaken only ourselves, leaving the strength of science to others. The first step in a defense against tyranny is the fullest possible exposure of controlling techniques. A second step has already been taken successfully in restricting the use of physical force. Slowly, and as yet imperfectly, we have worked out an ethical and governmental design in which the strong man is not allowed to use the power deriving from his strength to control his fellow men. He is restrained by a superior force created for that purpose—the ethical pressure of the group, or more explicit religious and governmental measures. We tend to distrust superior forces, as we currently hesitate to relinquish sovereignty in order to set up an international police force. But it is only through such counter-control that we have achieved what we call peace—a condition in which men are not permitted to control each other through force. In other words, control itself must be controlled.

Science has turned up dangerous processes and materials before. To use the facts and techniques of a science of man to the fullest extent without making some monstrous mistake will be difficult and obviously perilous. It is no time for self-deception, emotional indulgence, or the assumption of attitudes which are no longer useful. Man is facing a difficult test. He must keep his head now, or he must start again—a long way back.

V

Those who reject the scientific conception of man must, to be logical, oppose the methods of science as well. The position is often supported by predicting a series of dire consequences which are to follow if science is not checked. A recent book by Joseph Wood Krutch, *The Measure of Man,* is in this vein. Mr. Krutch sees in the growing science of man the threat of an unexampled tyranny over men's minds. If science is permitted to have its way, he insists, "we may never be able really to think again." A controlled culture will, for example, lack some virtue inherent in disorder. We have emerged from chaos through a series of happy accidents, but in an

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engineered culture it will be "impossible for the unplanned to erupt again." But there is no virtue in the accidental character of an accident, and the diversity which arises from disorder can not only be duplicated by design but vastly extended. The experimental method is superior to simple observation just because it multiplies "accidents" in a systematic coverage of the possibilities. Technology offers many familiar examples. We no longer wait for immunity to disease to develop from a series of accidental exposures, nor do we wait for natural mutations in sheep and cotton to produce better fibers; but we continue to make use of such accidents when they occur, and we certainly do not prevent them. Many of the things we value have emerged from the clash of ignorant armies on darkling plains, but it is not therefore wise to encourage ignorance and darkness.

It is not always disorder itself which we are told we shall miss but certain admirable qualities in men which flourish only in the presence of disorder. A man rises above an unpropitious childhood to a position of eminence, and since we cannot give a plausible account of the action of so complex an environment, we attribute the achievement to some admirable faculty in the man himself. But such "faculties" are suspiciously like the explanatory fictions against which the history of science warns us. We admire Lincoln for rising above a deficient school system, but it was not necessarily something *in him* which permitted him to become an educated man in spite of it. His educational environment was certainly unplanned, but it could nevertheless have made a full contribution to his mature behavior. He was a rare man, but the circumstances of his childhood were rare too. We do not give Franklin Delano Roosevelt the same credit for becoming an educated man with the help of Groton and Harvard, although the same behavioral processes may have been involved. The founding of Groton and Harvard somewhat reduced the possibility that fortuitous combinations of circumstances would erupt to produce other Lincolns. Yet the founders can hardly be condemned for attacking an admirable human quality.

Another predicted consequence of a science of man is an exces-

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sive uniformity. We are told that effective control—whether governmental, religious, educational, economic or social—will produce a race of men who differ from each other only through relatively refractory genetic differences. That would probably be bad design, but we must admit that we are not now pursuing another course from choice. In a modern school, for example, there is usually a syllabus which specifies what every student is to learn by the end of each year. This would be flagrant regimentation if anyone expected every student to comply. But some will be poor in particular subjects, others will not study, others will not remember what they have been taught, and diversity is assured. Suppose, however, that we someday possess such effective educational techniques that every student will in fact be put in possession of all the behavior specified in a syllabus. At the end of the year, all students will correctly answer all questions on the final examination and "must all have prizes." Should we reject such a system on the grounds that in making all students excellent it has made them all alike? Advocates of the theory of a special faculty might contend that an important advantage of the present system is that the good student learns *in spite of* a system which is so defective that it is currently producing bad students as well. But if really effective techniques are available, we cannot avoid the problem of design simply by preferring the status quo. At what point should education be deliberately inefficient?

Such predictions of the havoc to be wreaked by the application of science to human affairs are usually made with surprising confidence. They not only show a faith in the orderliness of human behavior; they presuppose an established body of knowledge with the help of which it can be positively asserted that the changes which scientists propose to make will have quite specific results—albeit not the results they foresee. But the predictions made by the critics of science must be held to be equally fallible and subject also to empirical test. We may be sure that many steps in the scientific design of cultural patterns will produce unforeseen consequences. But there is only one way to find out. And the test must be made, for if we cannot advance in the design of cultural patterns with

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absolute certainty, neither can we rest completely confident of the superiority of the status quo.

VI

Apart from their possibly objectionable consequences, scientific methods seem to make no provision for certain admirable qualities and faculties which seem to have flourished in less explicitly planned cultures; hence they are called "degrading" or "lacking in dignity." (Mr. Krutch has called the author's *Walden Two* an "ignoble Utopia.") The conditioned reflex is the current whipping boy. Because conditioned reflexes may be demonstrated in animals, they are spoken of as though they were exclusively subhuman. It is implied, as we have seen, that no behavioral processes are involved in education and moral discourse or, at least, that the processes are exclusively human. But men do show conditioned reflexes (for example, when they are frightened by all instances of the control of human behavior because some instances engender fear), and animals do show processes similar to the human behavior involved in instruction and moral discourse. When Mr. Krutch asserts that " 'Conditioning' is achieved by methods which by-pass or, as it were, short-circuit those very reasoning faculties which education proposes to cultivate and exercise," he is making a technical statement which needs a definition of terms and a great deal of supporting evidence.

If such methods are called "ignoble" simply because they leave no room for certain admirable attributes, then perhaps the practice of admiration needs to be examined. We might say that the child whose education has been skillfully planned has been deprived of the right to intellectual heroism. Nothing has been left to be admired in the way he acquires an education. Similarly, we can conceive of moral training which is so adequate to the demands of the culture that men will be good practically automatically, but to that extent they will be deprived of the right to moral heroism, since we seldom admire automatic goodness. Yet if we consider the end of morals rather than certain virtuous means, is not "automatic goodness" a desirable state of affairs? Is it not, for example, the

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avowed goal of religious education? T. H. Huxley answered the question unambiguously: "If some great power would agree to make me always think what is true and do what is right, on condition of being a sort of clock and wound up every morning before I got out of bed, I should close instantly with the offer." Yet Mr. Krutch quotes this as the scarcely credible point of view of a "protomodern" and seems himself to share T. S. Eliot's contempt for ". . . systems so perfect / That no one will need to be good."

"Having to be good" is an excellent example of an expendable honorific. It is inseparable from a particular form of ethical and moral control. We distinguish between the things we *have* to do to avoid punishment and those we *want* to do for rewarding consequences. In a culture which did not resort to punishment we should never "have" to do anything except with respect to the punishing contingencies which arise directly in the physical environment. And we are moving toward such a culture, because the neurotic, not to say psychotic, by-products of control through punishment have long since led compassionate men to seek alternative techniques. Recent research has explained some of the objectionable results of punishment and has revealed resources of at least equal power in "positive reinforcement." It is reasonable to look forward to a time when man will seldom "have" to do anything, although he may show interest, energy, imagination and productivity far beyond the level seen under the present system (except for rare eruptions of the unplanned).

What we have to do we do with *effort*. We call it "work." There is no other way to distinguish between exhausting labor and the possibly equally energetic but rewarding activity of play. It is presumably good cultural design to replace the former with the latter. But an adjustment in attitudes is needed. We are much more practiced in admiring the heroic labor of a Hercules than the activity of one who works without having to. In a truly effective educational system the student might not "have to work" at all, but that possibility is likely to be received by the contemporary teacher with an emotion little short of rage.

We cannot reconcile traditional and scientific views by agreeing

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upon *what* is to be admired or condemned. The question is whether anything is to be so treated. Praise and blame are cultural practices which have been adjuncts of the prevailing system of control in Western democarcy. All peoples do not engage in them for the same purposes or to the same extent, nor, of course, are the same behaviors always classified in the same way as subject to praise or blame. In admiring intellectual and moral heroism and unrewarding labor, and in rejecting a world in which these would be uncommon, we are simply demonstrating our own cultural conditioning. By promoting certain tendencies to admire and censure, the group of which we are a part has arranged for the social reinforcement and punishment needed to assure a high level of intellectual and moral industry. Under other and possibly better controlling systems, the behavior which we now admire would occur, but not under those conditions which make it admirable, and we should have no reason to admire it because the culture would have arranged for its maintenance in other ways.

To those who are stimulated by the glamorous heroism of the battlefield, a peaceful world may not be a better world. Others may reject a world without sorrow, longing or a sense of guilt because the relevance of deeply moving works of art would be lost. To many who have devoted their lives to the struggle to be wise and good, a world without confusion and evil might be an empty thing. A nostalgic concern for the decline of moral heroism has been a dominating theme in the work of Aldous Huxley. In *Brave New World* he could see in the application of science to human affairs only a travesty on the notion of the Good (just as George Orwell, in *1984*, could foresee nothing but horror). In a recent issue of *Esquire*, Huxley has expressed the point this way: "We have had religious revolutions, we have had political, industrial, economic and nationalistic revolutions. All of them, as our descendants will discover, were but ripples in an ocean of conservatism—trivial by comparison with the psychological revolution toward which we are so rapidly moving. *That* will really be a revolution. When it is over, the human race will give no further trouble." (Footnote for the reader of the future: This was not meant as a happy ending.

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Up to 1956 men had been admired, if at all, either for causing trouble or alleviating it. Therefore—)

It will be a long time before the world can dispense with heroes and hence with the cultural practice of admiring heroism, but we move in that direction whenever we act to prevent war, famine, pestilence and disaster. It will be a long time before man will never need to submit to punishing environments or engage in exhausting labor, but we move in that direction whenever we make food, shelter, clothing and labor-saving devices more readily available. We may mourn the passing of heroes but not the conditions which make for heroism. We can spare the self-made saint or sage as we spare the laundress on the river's bank struggling against fearful odds to achieve cleanliness.

VII

The two great dangers in modern democratic thinking are illustrated in a paper by former Secretary of State Dean Acheson. "For a long time now," writes Mr. Acheson, "we have gone along with some well-tested principles of conduct: That it was better to tell the truth than falsehoods; . . . that duties were older than and as fundamental as rights; that, as Justice Holmes put it, the mode by which the inevitable came to pass was effort; that to perpetrate a harm was wrong no matter how many joined in it . . . and so on. . . . Our institutions are founded on the assumption that most people follow these principles most of the time because they want to, and the institutions work pretty well when this assumption is true. More recently, however, bright people have been fooling with the machinery in the human head and they have discovered quite a lot. . . . Hitler introduced new refinements [as the result of which] a whole people have been utterly confused and corrupted. Unhappily neither the possession of this knowledge nor the desire to use it was confined to Hitler. . . . Others dip from this same devil's cauldron."

The first dangerous notion in this passage is that most people follow democratic principles of conduct "because they want to." This does not account for democracy or any other form of govern-

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ment if we have not explained why people *want* to behave in given ways. Although it is tempting to assume that it is human nature to believe in democratic principles, we must not overlook the "cultural engineering" which produced and continues to maintain democratic practices. If we neglect the conditions which produce democratic *behavior*, it is useless to try to maintain a democratic *form* of government. And we cannot expect to export a democratic form of government successfully if we do not also provide for the cultural practices which will sustain it. Our forebears did not discover the essential nature of man; they evolved a pattern of behavior which worked remarkably well under the circumstances. The "set of principles" expressed in that pattern is not the only true set or necessarily the best. Mr. Acheson has presumably listed the most unassailable items; some of them are probably beyond question, but others—concerning duty and effort—may need revision as the world changes.

The second—and greater—threat to the democracy which Mr. Acheson is defending is his assumption that knowledge is necessarily on the side of evil. All the admirable things he mentions are attributed to the innate goodness of man, all the detestable to "fooling with the machinery in the human head." This is reminiscent of the position, taken by other institutions engaged in the control of men, that certain forms of knowledge are in themselves evil. But how out of place in a democratic philosophy! Have we come this far only to conclude that well-intentioned people cannot study the behavior of men without becoming tyrants or that informed men cannot show good will? Let us for once have strength and good will on the same side.

VIII

Far from being a threat to the tradition of Western democracy, the growth of a science of man is a consistent and probably inevitable part of it. In turning to the external conditions which shape and maintain the behavior of men, while questioning the reality of inner qualities and faculties to which human achievements were once attributed, we turn from the ill-defined and re-

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mote to the observable and manipulable. Though it is a painful step, it has far-reaching consequences, for it not only sets higher standards of human welfare but shows us how to meet them. A change in a theory of human nature cannot change the facts. The achievements of man in science, art, literature, music and morals will survive any interpretation we place upon them. The uniqueness of the individual is unchallenged in the scientific view. Man, in short, will remain man. (There will be much to admire for those who are so inclined. Possibly the noblest achievement to which man can aspire, even according to present standards, is to accept himself for what he is, as that is revealed to him by the methods which he devised and tested on a part of the world in which he had only a small personal stake.)

If Western democracy does not lose sight of the aims of humanitarian action, it will welcome the almost fabulous support of its own science of man and will strengthen itself and play an important role in building a better world for everyone. But if it cannot put its "democratic philosophy" into proper historical perspective—if, under the control of attitudes and emotions which it generated for other purposes, it now rejects the help of science—then it must be prepared for defeat. For if we continue to insist that science has nothing to offer but a new and more horrible form of tyranny, we may produce just such a result by allowing the strength of science to fall into the hands of despots. And if, with luck, it were to fall instead to men of good will in other political communities, it would be perhaps a more ignominious defeat; for we should then, through a miscarriage of democratic principles, be forced to leave to others the next step in man's long struggle to control nature and himself.

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POEMS

DIANA CHANG

Lines for an Anniversary

So much biography is incipient in the present moment:
All the columns of a lost history
Lean over the body, like phantoms
Fretting to enter reality.

Geography we have never seen
Travels backward to us;
Incipient in the negative
Is the candid picture of a future dream.

A man stands like a country
Clarified by different weathers;
His travels leave a little foreignness,
Where he has never been.

Time unfolds within the mortal center, and
Love weathers anything but a stationary scene,
For people and places live brightest
As voyages on a growing theme.

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Four Views in Praise of Reality

1

All things beautiful begin
In imagination's small society:
The points of harmony are old houses
Quiet beyond the sound of the sea.

The painter makes bright squares
Of gold, his canvas is as dear
As sunshine in Schenectady.

New England's blue geography
Is closer to imagery
Than the circling of infinity.

2

Music is prismatic among these heights,
Where steep and dark the conversations run—
Nowhere in Manhattan does Euclid cease.

Music sings drily into toneless equations,
Its notes like cold stars constricted by time,
They repeat the fiction of a human position.

But hosannas to truth are mute and fair,
Their dumb warm circuits dominate
A low, miraculous firmament of air.

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3

The innocence of a rose
Is what the poet wants,
A certain lack of philosophy
But definite roseness,

So that life will not look at him
Through the eyes of a green wall,
A fireplace, a clock, objects
That have each a place to begin,

Green, white, gold, their centers
Sing, while all night long
His mind is desolate
In a metaphysical scene.

4

The city does not seem to know
Its real estate in space and sky
May outlast your integrity,

Though in the windows of your eyes
The instinct for the absolute
Wanders in gradual suicide.

The city is wise and visible,
Certain of an actual view,
But you engage its reality.

✪ DIANA CHANG has had poems published in *Poetry, Perspective* and *Voices.* She is at present completing her first novel.

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The New Schoolboy's Shining Face

GEORGE N. SHUSTER

AMONG INNUMERABLE PRIVATE CAPSULE definitions of education, I find my own and, frankly, rather like it. Schools and similar institutions exist to impart information, to form habits of intellectual accuracy, and to foster judgment—moral, aesthetic and prudential. There is nothing specially glamorous about such a pedagogical platform, but if its precepts could be put into practice in any genuinely effective way, mankind would no doubt prove to be rather superior to what it is now. At any rate it may be interesting to consider what is the present state of education ten years after the end of a cataclysm which had the extraordinary effect of concentrating the human scene, in a world-wide sense, and very greatly reducing it in size. What had thitherto been culturally exotic now began to be superseded for the imagination by the culturally uniform. Emphasis was no longer placed on who does voodoo dances and where, but rather on who can read and write, work a Worthington pump, and keep the flies away from the meat in the butcher shop. The impact of this change in orientation on certain great civilizations is quite evident and amazing. Mysterious China suddenly stopped repeating the maxims of Confucius and placating ancestral spirits. At least it has done so in public, being now committed to repeating phrases about capitalism, class warfare, imperialism and the glories of industrial production, which ten years ago seemed to many of us more provincial Americans the exclusive property of the *Daily Worker*. People in India are no doubt still making trips to Benares in search of nirvana, but when their principal leaders speak

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they sound like members of Henry Wallace's dimly remembered Progressive party. Or, to cite another illustration, in Brazil's São Paulo, one skyscraper is going up beside another almost as fast as sodas line up on a counter; and when I was recently there admiring their assorted sizes and symmetries, there was a guest performance of the Folies Bergères in the dingy old Opera House, and the true centers of culture were incredibly baroque movie theaters, the marble steps of which one climbed in state to see Marilyn Monroe.

Two things may, perhaps, be said in general about these trends. First, there is present in them a desire for a new way of looking from the inside of man at the outside world, and like all novel and, indeed, revolutionary decisions, this desire has lately very profoundly affected education. Second, the world feels, whether it approves or is hostile, that this way is what the masters of human society at present live by and inculcate, these masters being the United States and Russia. Obviously it is not easy to explain what the "new way" is, and one's endeavor to do so will depend pretty much on the situation in which one happens to find oneself. The world is full of places where nothing could be worse than it has been in terms of human welfare. These are areas in which primitive cultures have stood still, or in which once great and luxuriant civilizations have petered out. A farmer who ploughs worn-out soil with a forked stick and is then unable to shoo the rabbits from his spindly cereal crop because rabbits are sacred and must therefore be treated with the utmost courtesy is in a serious plight, indeed. Since there are unfortunately many who resemble him, it makes sense to reform his attitudes and methods, difficult though it may be.

Nevertheless, such reforms must be paid for. There are important differences between a life spent in the contemplation of the whole of being, and one which is devoted to the employment of that part of being which is immediately useful. It may seem only sheer common sense to settle for that which provides prosperity and comfort, but, alas, man is a creature who cannot be satisfied that way. He seems forever to be shortchanging either his body or his soul, and unless he can deal honestly with both, happiness is for him impossible. He can have everything tangible and still be pro-

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foundly miserable; he can possess nothing anyone could lay his hands on and still be quite jubilant. Hence the mysterious misery of our race. Were it not for this disease, bred into the marrow of our bones, we should have no literature, art or religion. And we cannot do without them.

And so our world is also full of places where only the queer and the benighted still till the ground with broomsticks, but where, possibly because they cannot make up their minds to choose between the "whole" and the "part," people entertain no great longing for the "new way." These are primarily the areas in which the civilization of the Old World, nurtured by Greece and Rome and revitalized by Christianity, is either indigenous or has come into being through one form or other of cultural penetration. Here one almost invariably finds a group—a majority or a minority—which desires no radical change, and another group which is strongly in favor of it for various reasons. The debate between these is argued on various levels, but more frequently than not there ensues a shift of ground on both sides, depending largely on what the influence of the centers of world power, Washington and Moscow, is at a given moment. This influence may be very brazen or very subtle. It will be resented and opposed, welcomed and applauded, but it will be absorbed into the bloodstream of the national mind.

Thus it seems that throughout Europe younger intellectuals have veered away from the philosophic disciplines toward education in technical subjects and in the sciences underlying them. René d'Harcourt reported that this was the case in France as early as 1948, and it would seem that the trend has been even more pronounced since that time. In Germany, a public opinion poll (American influence this, for better or worse) conducted by younger social scientists to determine the "prestige value" of the several professions, indicated, though the sampling may have been too limited, that insofar as the general population is concerned the professor still enjoys the greatest social respect. Yet the reason, the analysts say, is that in Germany the ultimate authority to which one turns when local medicos run out of hope is the teacher of medicine in a university clinic. For the younger generation, the engineer or

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the master of business administration stands, however, second on the list. It is of some lugubrious interest to note that professional writers fare very poorly in the poll. This for a country presumably reared in the shadow of Schiller and Goethe is strange news indeed. But the fact remains that both religion and philosophy are, intellectually speaking, much more vigorous in Germany than in the United States, particularly among members of the scientific professions.

Since West Germany is probably the part of the world in which the example of the United States is most zealously followed, it may be well to consider at this point, as realistically as conditions permit, what people outside think that example is. I believe one may approach the phenomenon from three sides. First, there is the formula for getting things done. That is, finding some *thing* to do the work for some *one*. Let me, at the risk of boredom, make the point in autobiographical terms. My grandfather was lured to Wisconsin from his home in Pennsylvania by the blandishments of one who must have been for those days a clever real-estate salesman. When he arrived to survey his manorial estate, into which he had put all his savings, he found ten acres of cleared land on the edge of which was a log house and a barn, a hundred and sixty acres of virgin forest, and an orchard. For years he supported the family by peddling the orchard fruit, meanwhile working as hard as he could to clear more land. But, when, after the close of the First World War his farm was sold, the first thing the new owner did was to cut down the orchard. The reason was, of course, simple. One cannot work an orchard with a tractor and a reaper. This straightforward deed has always seemed to me a symbol of the logic by which my time has lived. There is a great deal to be said for it, and naturally it is being said in many parts of the world.

The second visible side of the American phenomenon is in a way more beguiling. Just as the machine has freed man's arms, so it has also liberated his feet. Not even the most opulent of our cities possesses sufficient attractions to keep people in them when escape is possible. On weekends they travel bumper to bumper to houses with trees around them so that, apparently, the family fathers can

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stand in cellars, behind knotty-pine bars, ladling out the products of the distilling industry. And when the spirit is really weary, a simple remedy is at hand. One can take a plane to Paris, sip the beverages of Montmartre, and improve the soul by diving into Notre Dame and the Louvre. To be sure, all this costs money, which the income-tax-collector is always infernally trying to take away; but as the travel statistics indicate, he is either far less crafty or more indulgent than his reputation would seem to suggest. At any rate, the ability of the American to carpet the European landscape (and some others as well) with a beguiling hue of green is one of the aspects of his life at which culturally undeveloped aliens both marvel and shake their heads. To think of a country in which the schoolteachers, despite their reputations for abject poverty, can take off in droves for guided tours through almost everywhere anyone can suggest is enough to give the local spectator a sense of dizziness in altitudes to which he can never aspire.

The third side is unfortunate. It is vacuity. Just why so many educated, and indeed often semi-literate, foreigners believe that the average American devotee to the free enterprise system is a nitwit with no interest in higher values cannot easily be discovered. While Douglas Bush, most acidulous of Harvard professors, in diagnosing the contemporary culture of his country, reports that there are more earnest students of letters than he has ever previously encountered, and while candidates for the contemplative Trappist Order have reached an unprecedented total in this country, judgment of the outside world on American culture has attained to a hitherto inaccessible nadir. I surmise that one of the principal explanations can be found in the fact that the character of what Germans were wont to call the *Herrschaften* from America has changed. These are no longer gentlemen from Yale and Princeton interested in conferring about intellectual problems, but citizens concerned with the baser things of life.

Yet there is something else which needs documentation, though none exists now, and it is beyond my ability to supply it. Casserley and Sorokin have both emphasized, though their methods of doing so are diverse, that a "culture of the senses" is the corollary of

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"romantic love." And one surmises that the frank, often almost barbaric way in which these find expression among us, appears to the rest of the world naive and shocking, however rotten at the core it may itself be. The climate of the United States would seem to be doing to the Caucasoid man much the same as it did to his presumably Mongoloid precursor. It is making him tall, lean, bronzed and naked. Unquestionably a certain readiness to resort to tomahawks and war whoops goes along with this development. When I was stationed in Bavaria, I happened to come to the little city of Niala, perched very close to the Iron Curtain separating West Germany from East. It was an industrial community which depended for much of its livelihood upon a sizable shoe factory. The population had been swelled by more than a thousand deportees who were either quartered on the citizenry or housed in a camp, this decidedly down at the heels. Nevertheless, in three years the town had not known a single case of homicide. This, in the light of American experience, was a remarkable fact.

I concluded that killing somebody, which is a messy business even when one is not caught doing it, presupposes a reasonably engrossing motive. There was probably little reason for slaughtering others for their money in Niala. Of course, people are known who slay their fellow men for the fun of it, but either none of this sort was in town or the tools for the job were lacking. But there is something else. Romantic love is obviously a major source of homicidal impulses, and it is probable that not a single case of that variety of love could be found in all Niala. There, if a working girl is not very refined, she gets herself in a family way and is then, as a matter of course, married off to the boy. If she is more sedate, she puts an ad in the paper listing her assets and her charms, and selects from the respondents the man deemed most likely to appreciate her and her worldly possessions. Finally, if she be truly idealistic in this Catholic community, she will behave as much like the Virgin Mary as possible and secure a husband who appreciates that kind of girl.

But a civilization like ours is made to order for romantic love. It is not merely that being interested in your prospective bride's accumulation of living-room furniture and goose-feather-filled pil-

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lows would seem to us fearfully mercenary—which it perhaps is. The major fact is that her beauty, grace and sparkling wit will presumably occupy pleasantly the hours not spent in finding the money with which to support her. This is one of the ways in which what was the luxury of a civilization dominated by idle aristocrats has permeated the whole culture of a society that has distributed leisure. Professor Casserley has argued lucidly and persuasively that the principal modern problem is how to extend to working masses liberated from drudgery by technological advances, the cultural advantages which, subsequent to the great revolutions of the past, were shared by the middle classes. He is quite right, and if one defines "cultural advantages" as he does, the goal is eminently desirable. Well, we have now lighted the fire of romantic love in nearly every heart, with the help of all known mass media of communication. And we realize, I trust, that for the presence or absence of it men and women alike can kill, with uncanny precision and reckless abandon. Alas, one must add that for millions this kind of love turns out to be one hundred per cent hokum. In a short while bulges appear on Sylvia's hips and knots on her legs. Her wit is merely a "line" which once recited has no sequel; and the only way to talk to her is to turn on television. Small wonder, perhaps, that the rest of the world, looking at and listening to the endless variations of romantic love which we peddle abroad with uninhibited abandon, should ask whether civilization is wholly safe in our hands.

On the other hand there is Russia, which advertises its product as the "new way" in its simon-pure state. In some respects its Communist ruling class can advance relatively legitimate claims to glory. It has, at great cost to the freedom and welfare of individuals, promoted the development of industry and with that the production of usable merchandise. Whether the price paid was higher, in terms of human suffering, than that exacted when capitalism was foisted on western Europe is a moot question. I am inclined to think it cannot have been more than four or five times greater. The major difference is that, certainly in the cases of British and German capitalist exploitation, less than half a century passed

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before compelling voices were calling for the cessation of its abuses. The beginning of the end of industrial serfdom in both countries dates back at least a hundred years, and the major reason was freedom of the press, of religion and of assembly. No such liberties have been granted to the Russian people since 1917, and of course they enjoyed them only sporadically prior to that time.

Recently a number of writers have contended that the key to the enigma of Russia is that its people are by nature anarchical, and have argued that therefore their government must of necessity exercise constraining force. Perhaps they have found some sort of solution of the riddle. Authorities on Russian religion, Berdyaev and von Eckardt among them, have long since stressed the antipathy to organization and authoritative teaching which they deem to have been characteristic of the orthodox faith in its noblest days. And when one reads accounts of the Revolution by Feodor Stepun and others, a vision arises of peasants who for no plausible reason, save possibly a dream of benefits somehow likely to accrue to them, made government by suppression possible for Lenin. It seems to me, at any rate, that this interpretation makes much more sense than does any other of which I know.

Perhaps the strength of the Russian version of the "new way" has been derived from the two sources thus briefly indicated. On the one hand, there is abroad a feeling, difficult to dispel, that although up to this time the Communist revolution has been a disillusioning experience, the day will soon dawn when its success will be shown to be complete and overwhelming. And on the other hand, it is half unconsciously surmised that the followers of Lenin have fully reckoned with what is anarchical—which means, opposed to discipline and social constraint—in human nature, and will therefore establish a social order more palatable than what has seemingly become the norm in the United States.

In my opinion, we have gravely underestimated the appeal which regimentation has for untold millions of human beings. Even the Protestant religions in the United States are strongest when, as do the Lutherans and the Methodists, they prescribe a stern code for their adherents. The notion that each person should be free to act

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within the light of his own conscience may well be truly possible only for those who have very recently been emancipated from the bonds of dogma. To us generally it may seem that allegiance to the Hegelian-Marxist-Leninist doctrine is both irrational and constrictive; and no doubt nations like the Hungarians and the Poles, who have lived under its prophets, will agree. Yet large numbers of other men do not. To them the United States looks like a factory in which all the spindles turn while the people who operate them are all a bit tipsy. In Russia being tipsy is presumably not allowed.

All this helps to account for the partial success of the Communist peace propaganda. Superficially considered, nothing seems more absurd than that the Russians, who have violated countless agreements and started conflicts wherever they deemed them desirable, should be feeding the dove of peace in their cote. But if we bear in mind what manner of folk the world thinks we are, the riddle is easier to solve. The Kremlin can keep the peace if it so desires. But if some United States senator or general decides that war is a good idea and drums up enough support, what insurance has the rest of the world against Armageddon? This queer notion is, I believe, slowly dying out, but it has been for a long time the most formidable weapon in the Soviet propaganda arsenal.

But there is no doubt that it is the Russian use of education which most markedly defines communism in action at the present time. In order to secure control of the schools in Hungary, for instance, the Kremlin and its stooges fought an epic battle with the Catholic Church. What has emerged is a system one can perhaps best describe as Jesuit teaching of the humanistic period stood upon its head. The idea which underlay that teaching was to make available to pupils the great literature of classical antiquity and then to fuse this with Catholic doctrine and motivation. Communism in Hungary (and of course elsewhere) sets out with the determination to make education serve as the instrument for disseminating technological skills, because only these prepare for the kind of life which will help transform society into the *summum bonum*—a smoothly functioning unit of production. On this, courses in the ideology of communism are superimposed. These run all the way

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from a kind of secularized Sunday school for the workers, to highly specialized indoctrination at the university level. What one can learn about its textbooks and methods is of great interest because manifestly little time is spent on dissecting Marx and Lenin, and very much on proving that the Communist state is an ideal incarnation of what America is popularly supposed to be—a place which exists in order to make wheels turn efficiently and so raise the standard of living. And of course queer things happen. After having got its educational system going full blast in Hungary, meanwhile gouging the peasants and herding them into collective farming, it was discovered that one of Europe's breadbaskets was without food and that there was no place to put the quickly trained young devotees of technology! One of the minor grim notes in Prime Minister Rákosi's many addresses explaining why things had gone to pot was a reference to young ladies trained in typing and stenography. These he said would be given jobs by the government doing manual labor. And as a result of all this there unquestionably exists behind the Iron Curtain a vast anti-clerical movement—in the sense of opposition to the reigning clerical caste—which corrodes ideological orthodoxy even though it is wholly impotent to influence in any way the use of the vast technological machine which the government has created and controls.

I now come belatedly to the moral about education which seemingly needs to be appended. The Russian problem is how to keep the machines going in their industrial paradise. In this basket are all their eggs that can still be hatched. Our wheels do turn, thank God, and of course we must see to it that they continue to do so. The major problem for us is the conquest of vacuity through education, because vacuity is the result of the leisure which technology makes possible. For the first time in history great masses of people find themselves surrounded by vast reaches of space and time; and if you do not know what to do with space, it defines itself as emptiness, and time moves into a sort of twilight shared with eternity. Leisure, surmised Georges Bernanos cynically, is that from which one escapes by going to work. And of course the reason why men can be so driven is the dreadful nakedness of the self in isolation

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when one has not encountered it previously. To find one's soul when one has not dreamed it existed may well be for many, especially those belonging to a culture which has expressed itself so energetically in action, a quite unnerving shock.

And so the schoolboy who now turns his shining face to the future must no longer be trained merely for the tasks he is to perform. He will need the twin modes of intellectual life which are interior discipline and outgoing dialogue, because only so can he exist with a measure of happiness during the long hours when some *thing* does his work for *him*. It is not necessary for me to say where such an education can find the precepts and the methods it requires. They are the legacy of the aristocratic past, which must now become the democratic future. All this, of which the Russian is not officially permitted to think, has now become that which we must have in our minds if we are to endure.

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If You Don't Mind My Saying So . . . . . .

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

WHEN I VISITED MY NATIVE TOWN in the spring of 1945, it was buzzing with rumor. At Oak Ridge, some fifty miles away, mysterious things were going on. Some said that they had to do with the disintegration of the atom, and when this guess was passed on I smiled a rather superior smile. "That," I said, "is a good many years away."

A few months later, on the morning of August sixth, my wife broke my early morning sleep. "The radio has just announced that an atom bomb was exploded over Japan. What does *that* mean?" "It means," I said, "that I am scared to death." A bad prophet I had obviously been, but like a good many of my fellow citizens I could be wise after the event.

Usually the great crises of history have not been recognized at the moment. Few seventeenth-century Englishmen knew that an apple (the most fateful since Eve's) had fallen upon Newton's head. Decades later no Londoner exclaimed to another, "Watt has just invented the steam engine—and you know what *that* means." Only three Magi and a few shepherds knew that Jesus had been born. But we seem to have changed all that.

We may be wrong in our estimate, though it does not seem probable that we are, at least so far as the momentousness of the event is concerned. But it is less likely that we have assessed it with perfect accuracy, and ever since I recovered from the first shock I have

With this issue of THE AMERICAN SCHOLAR, JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH completes the first year of his column, "If You Don't Mind My Saying So." Formerly Brander Matthews Professor of Dramatic Literature at Columbia University, Mr. Krutch is now living in Tucson, Arizona, where he devotes himself entirely to writing. His philosophical book, *The Measure of Man,* received the 1954 National Book Award for nonfiction. *The Voice of the Desert,* published in the fall of 1955, is his most recent book.

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wondered whether the most obvious meanings are the only or even the most important ones.

Everyone knows that what disintegrated along with some billions of plutonium atoms was the last small vestige of physical security for the civilian which TNT and the airplane had left us. So also, however, did various other things less immediately recognized. Even ten years later, optimists and pessimists are still concerned chiefly with the question of whether the new era is bright with the prospect of new powers and prosperity, or whether it is only a new era of destruction. But two fundamental premises vanished into thin air along with those certain material particles which ceased, in that instant, to be material at all. And the two premises were these: (1) that what we called our "control" over nature really was effective, and (2) that physical science had at last made the physical universe intelligible.

The first premise is no longer tenable because a force can hardly be said to be under control if it threatens to destroy all civilization and possibly all life. The second is not tenable because the physical universe has turned out to be so different from what was confidently assumed that some leading scientists are already expressing the opinion that it is radically unintelligible—that no image we can ever form of it will correspond to what actually is. Should we manage somehow to escape self-destruction, then it may quite possibly turn out that the abandonment of these two premises will affect the future of civilization quite as much as any new power the atom can be made to release.

That there was a catch somewhere in our boasted control was suspected by some from the time when we first began to boast of it. Those few always feared that, like Faust, we were selling our souls for powers which seemed unlimited but in fact were not. Like Faust we exclaimed:

> Who would not be proficient in this art?
> How pliant is this Mephistopheles,
> Full of obedience and humility!
> Such is the force of magic and my spells.

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But like Faust again, we discovered that the Devil is controllable only so long as he consents to be, and that the more of his power we acquire, the more completely we become his victim. We controlled the steam in the piston and the electric current which circles the armature, but we neither controlled nor even foresaw the effects, good and bad, which the steam engine and the electric motor would have upon civilization.

To the few who pointed this out the reply was commonly either that the end would be somehow good or that, in any event, we must go where fate is taking us. But neither of these replies will any longer do. Mephistopheles is not to be trusted. Self-destruction is too high a price to pay for power or even for the disinterested pursuit of truth. We may be glad that we invented the Bomb first. But there are few who now doubt that it would have been better if its invention had been forever impossible to any human being whatsoever.

From the beginning, science promised us two things. Besides that ability to manipulate our physical environment which reached its ultimate when the atom was rent asunder, it promised something often called more important. Science would, it was said, do much more than make our lives more comfortable, more convenient, more safe and more abundant. It would also give us a clear insight into The Nature of Things and replace with demonstrable Truth those fragmentary, illogical and inconsistent notions about the structure and workings of the universe which poetry, metaphysics and religion had foisted upon us.

The first promise has certainly been abundantly fulfilled if the word *manipulate* is insisted upon and not confused with the word *control.* But the once generally accepted belief that the second promise was also being kept turns out to be a delusion when even the less radically skeptical physicists admit that what used to be called "the scientific world view" is by no means clear or consistent and that, at a minimum, the universe is very unlike what it was supposed to be. The newest "scientific world view" dissolves nineteenth-century certainties into a mist of guesses and paradoxes at

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least as full of inconsistencies and incomprehensibilities as any mishmash of religion, mythology, metaphysics and poetry ever was. "I believe because it is absurd" has come again to sum up the most advanced credo.

How many angels can stand on the point of a needle? That question, so I have been reliably informed, seems never to have been asked by any schoolman and was invented by some nineteenth-century rationalist who imagined that it was the sort of thing a schoolman would ask. Modern physics, on the other hand, does ask how many atoms could be placed on that point where angels might once have stood. Moreover, physics answers it—probably correctly enough. But it has no more idea what an atom is than it has what an angel would be like. It can count atoms and even disintegrate them. But it does not know what they are. The determination to manipulate the physical world has proved astonishingly successful while the determination to understand it seems to have failed completely.

Once we were told that if some results of technological advance were dubiously desirable we ought to be willing to accept them in exchange for that enlightenment of the understanding which accompanies the march of scientific achievement. But that understanding we now know has eluded us; and it will be a grim joke on the Hero as Scientist if the final result of his efforts is to be not merely that he will blow himself to bits, but that his last moments will be those during which he is less clear in his own mind than he ever was before concerning the real nature of the universe around him. May it be that the only things to survive Hiroshima are pure technology on the one hand and, on the other, philosophy, metaphysics, and even, as a remote possibility, religion? Did Science as Guide and Savior die there at the very moment when its claim to be a master of power was most abundantly vindicated? No poet, philosopher or metaphysician has ever done his job one-tenth so well as the scientist did his—partly, perhaps, because the job of the scientist is easier. But no one except the poet, the philosopher and the metaphysician has ever done the harder job at all.

Some few scientists still assure us that all they need is more time.

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The day will come, they say, when science will establish ethics and even aesthetics on a sound scientific basis. We shall then know what is Good and what is Beautiful as surely as we now know the formula for water. When that time comes we shall be sure at last of not only what is worth having, but how to get it; not only how to blow people up, but just who, and under what circumstances they should be disintegrated. Knowing, as then we shall, what good, wise (and of course "adjusted") men really are, we shall be able to produce them as surely as we now produce metals or plastics to fit the specifications drawn up in advance.

Perhaps. But time is running out. Can we afford to wait? Since August 6, 1945, it has seemed less likely that we can.

For as long, almost, as human thought has left a record, there have been those who insist that behind all the diverse manifestations of the universe there lies but one protean substance which reveals itself to our minds under aspects as diverse as what we call "matter" and what we call "energy," "thought" and even "spirit." Instead of saying that reality is "nothing but" one or another of these, they believed it to be something capable of being them all. At the very beginning of the scientific age, Giordano Bruno was one such. But during most of the three centuries which lie between him and us, the boldest, the most active and the most successful investigators of nature assumed a premise directly antithetical to his. Matter and energy, for instance, were not one thing but two. What is called thought and emotion must be some form of energy if, indeed, they are to be assumed to exist at all as more than by-products of energy acting upon matter.

On the basis of this premise the great triumphs of physics and chemistry were achieved. When Einstein set forth his famous conversion formula he turned his back upon the working hypothesis which for more than three centuries had worked so well; and he took a long stride backward toward monism and Bruno. The mind-body problem did not, to be sure, concern him at the moment. He did not suggest that mind, or spirit, is the same as energy, just as energy is the same as matter. But the analogy is close and the specu-

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lative extension of the one proposition to include the other seems, at the very least, not fantastic.

Had Einstein's formula remained on paper where he himself might very well have left it, most of the world would have been little impressed. Today, mathematics may carry more weight than metaphysics does, but only to the new physicists, already deep in both, did a mere formula carry much conviction. Most of us do not believe anything unless something happens when the belief is acted upon. And something did happen over Hiroshima. If a city is destroyed because a small group of men were ready to proceed on the assumption that $E = MC^2$, then we are willing to grant that matter and energy really are convertible. A general public which has never heard of monism begins to lean again in its direction.

From news items I learn that several "teams" are still busy officially investigating the various "side effects" of the first bombs. But has anyone undertaken to investigate the ideological casualties, to determine not only to what concepts radiation was fatal, but also what damage was suffered by those which survived, and perhaps most important of all, what gene mutations will reveal themselves in the next generation of concepts, philosophical as well as scientific?

Positivists are fond of assuring us that various current terms are "meaningless." But they were hoist on their own super-petard when its explosion rendered meaningless certain of their own favorite words, notably *material* and *materialistic*. If Einstein was as right as the bombs seem to have proved him, then these terms have ceased to mean anything at all.

To say "I am a materialist" is meaningful only if the concept *matter* can be defined in such a way as to distinguish matter clearly from something else. Until a few years ago such definition seemed easy. "Matter is that which occupies space and has weight." This definition distinguished it as clearly from *energy*, which occupies no space and has no weight, as it did from *life* or *spirit* or *idea*, which, having neither the characteristics of matter nor the characteristics of energy, were sometimes assumed not to exist at all.

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To say "I am a materialist" meant "I believe that the only fundamental reality is that which occupies space and which has weight."

But the matter which disintegrated privately over the American desert and then publicly over Japan ceased in those instants either to weigh anything or to occupy any space. At those instants, therefore, the meaning of the term *materialist* disappeared as completely as the disintegrated atoms themselves. When men fought in the streets of Byzantium over the terms *Homoöusian* and *Homoiousian,* some shadow of meaning may have remained in them. But between the man who says, "I am a materialist because everything is material," and the man who says, "I am not a materialist because nothing is ultimately material," no definable difference any longer exists. What is material at one moment may become, in an instant, not material at all.

On the basis of this seemingly demonstrated fact, many a scientific treatise will have to be revised if the now meaningless statements are to be eliminated from them. Almost at random I opened a recent book on one of the biological sciences. There the authority of a distinguished scientist is quoted to support the contention that the appearance of life on earth can be accounted for "without the intervention of the non-material." Does this statement, in the light of the most recent knowledge, mean anything at all?

On that morning ten years ago, my first reaction, formulated while I was still between sleep and waking, was proper enough. In fact I am rather proud of it. I had then—and we all still have—good reason to be scared. But I have wondered increasingly whether that phrase sums up everything we ought to feel. The metaphysical consequences, if we survive to enjoy them, may be salutary as well as immeasurable, and we may be waking at last from a long bad dream. It may seem a pity that blessings should come as thoroughly disguised as they sometimes do. Whoever arranged this one appears to have outdone himself—if he really did wrap up a boon in that package. But who knows? They say that God works in mysterious ways. Possibly they are sometimes even as mysterious as in this instance they seem to be.

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..... *The Revolving Bookstand* .....

This Literary Generation

ROBERT LANGBAUM

Even before World War II was over, everyone was speculating about the character of the new literary generation; and the speculation continues—with publishers positively prospecting for the new Hemingway, the new Fitzgerald, the new Faulkner, and with any number of alert critics ready to pounce upon whatever new trends are in the making to turn them into literary history. I wonder if any literary generation has ever been so awaited, so encouraged, even compelled, to be original, to display its character. The result is that the new generation, the generation that fought the war and is now in its thirties and early forties, still seems, to everyone's dismay including its own, to have no character. Nobody has said this outright, but it is implied by the words used to describe the new generation—words like *conservative, academic, conformist, other-directed* and, best of all, *silent.* The Silent Generation is, I think, the name which will stick. Now no one could be more dismayed by all this than the new generation itself, as I, a member of it, can testify; for no one could be more interested in learning what the character of the new generation is going to be than we are.

The trouble is that the older literary men were expecting a new Lost Generation and have never forgiven us for not being original in their manner. I remember a talk Malcolm Cowley gave a few years ago before a college literary society, in which he chided the young writers as timid, conventional prigs who were taking university jobs for the sake of economic security. He told amusing anecdotes of his own youthful days of wild, hand-to-mouth existence, and spoke of the interesting characters he had known—of Hart Crane and the odd things he did before he went mad and committed suicide, and of Scott Fitzgerald who, the last time Cowley saw him, was on the wagon, drinking tumblers of water which he finally confessed were gin. Somewhere the tone had changed, the amusing anecdotes had turned into something else. The change made us feel, in Browning's words, "chilly and grown old." We felt the passing of time and the gulf separating us from that period.

Not that we were indifferent to its romance. The nostalgia for the twenties has been a phenomenon of the past decade—a dialectic of comparison having been established between the two postwar decades, with the thirties a mere bridge making little appeal at the moment to our imagination. If the nostalgia proceeds from the regret of the older people for the youth they have lost, it proceeds also from the regret of the young people for the youth they have missed. For we shared, I suppose, the expectation of the older people that we would repeat the experience of the Lost Generation; but we found ourselves, once the war was over, somehow too old for an experience involving so much exuberant irresponsibility. John Aldridge, in *After the Lost Generation,* his study of the new novelists, tells how he and his literary friends thought they were going to participate in a brilliant postwar period of revolt and innovation, but came to realize soon after the war was over that the new age had not arrived and was not going to. In the same way, one might add, the new Hemingway and the new Fitzgerald, the novelists we

✪ Assistant professor of English at Cornell University, ROBERT LANGBAUM is a frequent contributor to periodicals and author of a forthcoming book on the romantic tradition in literature.

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were waiting for who would speak for this generation as the novelists of the twenties spoke for theirs, have not arrived and may not be going to. Instead we have what is on every side being attacked as an age of criticism.

Malcolm Cowley, for example, has since published his attack on the present period in his book, *The Literary Situation*, where he calls it "the new age of the rhetoricians" —comparing it to the last period of classical culture when creative activity was relegated to the past, and literary effort was devoted to establishing an authoritative canon of great works and classifying and reclassifying, analyzing and reanalyzing them with ever more tortuous subtlety and ingenuity. The same attack has been made with even greater violence by younger critics like Randall Jarrell, Irving Howe, John Aldridge. In fact, the rhetoricians themselves are the first to agree with their attackers, to sigh "all too true and all too sad" as they turn back to their textual analyses. It is not their fault that they are thrust into the limelight by the absence of a creative literature powerful enough to keep them subsidiary.

If more criticism is being written than before, it is because more is being read. The serious young writer is tempted to write criticism because it sells more easily and brings faster prestige than poetry or even short fiction. He may also turn to criticism after having failed in his first attempts at fiction—after having found that he cannot in fiction escape the manner of his immediate predecessors, that he cannot invent a fable to express what is different about the new period; whereas he can express the difference by taking off in criticism from other men's fables. For the same reason, the reader of the literary quarterlies is likely to turn first to the critical articles, and may not even get around to the one story the issue carries. That is because he does not expect to find anything new in the story, but is almost certain to find something new in at least one or two of the articles. Indeed, if the talk one hears is any indication, the tendency to skip the fiction in magazines may be spreading to readers of the *New Yorker*, *Harper's* and the *Atlantic* as well.

Connected with the question of the new generation's character is the question of whether fiction is losing its old pre-eminence. "Is the novel dead?" has been the subject of a running debate these last ten years, a debate which may have reached its climax in England the summer before last with a newspaper controversy involving several famous names. The complaint against the new novels is that they are either not new or, if new, without general relevance. In other words, there has not yet emerged from them a set of characters and situations, a rhythm of speech, a code of manners, a point of view, which catch or create the style of this age as the novelists of the twenties both caught and created the style of theirs. To say the new generation has no character is to say that the new novelists have been unable—whether through their fault or ours—to show us our style, our sense of ourselves.

It is their style we envy the twenties, its consistency and their acute awareness of it. The age is all of a piece: the stripped prose of the novels and the cool forlornness of the young people in the novels, their drinking, their speeding in motorcars, their movement in novel after novel toward a wanton and elegant self-destruction—these things have their counterpart in the life outside the books: in the jazz, the new clothes for women, the new tough, informal sophistication, the new pathos of understatement. Both in and out of books these things, which we have inherited, were for them signs of their difference from the prewar generation, signs of their allegiance to a code uniting the young against the old—a code demanding that its adherents at any price, even the price of self-destruction, not be hypocrites and sentimentalists like the Victorians.

There, in the rebellion against the Victorians, we see why the twenties had style and we do not. The twenties still had the Victorian grannies and aunties around to shock. Typical of the posture they could assume was the well-known remark of Harold Ross that he was not editing the *New Yorker* for "the old lady from Dubuque." Nowadays, alas, the old lady from Dubuque

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reads the *New Yorker*, drinks martinis before dinner and is probably under analysis. She was, in fact, a flapper in her time—which is why the *New Yorker* has lost its kick and the old lady's children haven't got a point of view to call their own. Implicit in the fiction of the twenties is an age group and social class which could be identified with respectability and convention, and against which the protest of the young, their unconventional behavior and assertion of the meaninglessness of life, took on moral significance. There is no such given bulwark of respectability in the new fiction. The old are as "unconventional" as the young, often more so; and the well-to-do are notoriously more dissolute and often more politically radical than the poor.

I am reminded in this connection of a story in the *New Yorker* a few years ago by a new writer, Hortense Calisher. The story is about a good-looking, sensitive, Ivy League young man, the kind who in a Fitzgerald story would have gone in for a career of cutting-up. But this is a young man of the fifties who, with sober and long-suffering composure, takes care of an ex-flapper mother in her peregrinations between Greenwich Village, where she drinks, and the sanatorium in Greenwich, Connecticut, where she recovers. At the apartment of a Bohemian, homosexual older man, our hero meets the man's daughter, a demure young woman who has spent her life shuttling between her "interesting" father and a mother who has married and divorced some four or five times. The two young people strike up an immediate understanding. "For they were," the author says in the end, "the same age, whatever that was, whatever the age was of people like them." The story establishes perfectly the relation between the two postwar generations, the responsibility forced upon the young by the irresponsibility of the old. It also suggests a new literary pathos, the pathos of a generation that never was young—that, starting where its parents left off, aspires to domesticity and order as its parents aspired to freedom.

You will not find this pathos, however, in many new novels. Most of them still carry on with the pathos of youthful self-destructiveness, with protest and aggressive unconventionality. But since the protest does not, in the new setting, have an adequately represented object in respectability and convention, it takes on an automatic, compulsive quality which may, if the story comes off, give the protest a surrealistic or symbolic look, but which more often gives it the look of a tired literary convention. This is how, since Hemingway, young people in novels act: they drink, they are promiscuous, they say profound things in monosyllables, they don't give a damn—just as in the Victorian novels of the Byronic tradition the young men were reputedly wicked but always chivalrous, and the young women susceptible but chaste. It is as though the older novelists had bequeathed to us, in their picture of the First World War and the decade that followed it, a kind of literary country where our novels go on taking place regardless of their ostensible setting.

We have not been "capable," says Leslie Fiedler in last Summer's issue of *Partisan Review*, "of seeing around the great literary platitudes of the twenties."

> We have lived for thirty years in the world of someone else's dreams: a compulsive world in which Lieutenant Henry forever declares his private peace, Sherwood Anderson eternally walks out of his office, the Artist forever leaves the world of Puritanism and Respectability for the utopias of Bohemia or Expatriation. To be sure, we do not all relive the legendary pattern, or even believe it; but we have been unable to imagine our choices in any other image.

Mainly in critical writing, like this piece of Fiedler's, have we been given such liberating awareness and even shown the possibility of new choices. This may be why we talk of the decline of the novel and turn to social, psychological and literary discussion, to criticism in the widest sense, for that novelty of accent, that experience of breaking through the received to the actual truth which we used to look for in the novel. Does any novel speak so distinctively of and for the past decade as, say, *The Lonely Crowd* of Riesman, Glazer and Denney, or Lionel Trilling's *Liberal Imagination*?

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In a symposium published in *Partisan Review* in 1952, a large group of American intellectuals agreed that the intellectuals have since the war terminated their exile from American life, that they now find America as good a place as Europe and perhaps a better one for the thinker and artist. The symposium made a neat parallel with Harold Stearns' symposium of 1922, called *Civilization in the United States*, in which thirty American intellectuals agreed that America was no place for the life of intellect and art—thus giving at least one signal for that trek to Paris which was to figure so brilliantly in our cultural history. Reading the earlier symposium today, however, one finds that American life is still, despite certain improvements, very much as described there. Why, then, the return from exile, the switch from negation to affirmation?

The question is related to the question one asks about so many new novels, about so fine and honest a novel for example as Norman Mailer's *The Naked and the Dead*. Why, since we recognize as true Mailer's account of the sordidness of the war and of the American society which made his characters what they are, why are we not moved to greater indignation and compassion? The answer to both questions is, I think, that the fight against the bourgeois or Philistine sins, as these are defined by Mailer and the 1922 symposium, has been won on the *literary* front, even if we still commit them. That is, our vision has already been organized by the ideas Mailer draws on; so that we recognize in his novel what we have been taught to see with our old eyes, whereas literature at its best gives us new eyes. The return of the intellectuals from exile is merely a recognition of what has been achieved. But their new affirmative attitude is less an acquiescence to things as they are, than an attempt to define new issues, new objects for attack. To take one example: *The Lonely Crowd*, since it denies the relevance of many old issues, looks affirmative; yet there emerges from it, in the figure of the "other-directed" man, an object for as much critical attack as was launched in the twenties against the Philistine.

Certainly the contributors to the 1952 symposium did not relinquish the modern assumption that the intellectual's role is to criticize and that great literature is to be equated with what they called "critical nonconformism." One of the questions they considered was whether it would be possible, in the face of the new affirmative attitude, to maintain the American literary tradition of critical nonconformism. A few (Mailer was one) thought the new affirmative attitude not much more than a "sell-out"; but most thought that critical nonconformism would have plenty to do to improve the quality of our culture by taking up new issues.

It is not easy to see why criticism should at present care more conspicuously than fiction for new issues—unless it is that we have, through critical effort, to free ourselves from an old myth before we can make a new one. I sometimes think, in my more savage moments, that the real purpose of our age of criticism is to kill off our immediate predecessors in literature by *understanding* them, by tucking their dreams away in the pigeonholes of abstract discourse so we can get on with our own. A kinder interpretation of the same phenomenon is to say we have come to the point where we must pause to count the cultural riches of the modern period, to master a whole canon of modern classics before we can make our contribution.

For our age of criticism differs from the Alexandrian model at least in this: that we are not interested in old literature, but almost exclusively, too exclusively, in modern literature and what bears on modern literature. Nor are we only interested in explicating texts, but in bringing literature into such combination with the ideas and facts of the time as to create a new unity—a unity wrought by our very best critics with so much passion and imagination that their writing is not merely ancillary to literature but a literary genre in its own right. What we are really trying to do—and only this can explain the seriousness with which we read and write criticism—is to create out of the modern movement in literature a secular spirituality, a new tradition to give mean-

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ing to our culture. Even the so-called New Criticism, which is considered narrowly technical, has in its exploration of symbolic language no lesser purpose than to establish the validity of poetic statements of spiritual perception by showing them to be of another order of truth from scientific statements of fact.

We are doing two things with our critical effort. We are using modern literature as a source of revelation for the values we are trying to organize into a new tradition, at the same time that we are sifting out the cant of modernism. The double endeavor is understandable if we consider that modernism has removed us from the older orthodoxies, leaving only itself as a source for values; and that modernism, a movement of revolt, has itself become an orthodoxy with its own absurdities and hypocrisies. (Only think of the highly respectable professors who beam contentedly as the bright-eyed faces before them take it down in notebooks that ours is an age of despair, a waste-land, et cetera.) The concern with what is to be believed, rather than what is not to be believed, is understandable in a generation that is not *lost* because it has had the experience of fighting a war it believed in and has gone on believing in. Such a generation cannot give its respect to an attitude of merely naive revolt. For having seen revolutionary slogans used to support oppression, and having sustained the contradiction between its hatred of the war as a personal experience and its belief in the necessity of the war, it remains sensitive to complexities.

It is our sensitiveness to complexities that renders us *silent*—that, with a high ideal of taste of the absolutely first-rate in life and art, which may finally prove to be our distinguishing virtue. If we read fewer new novels, we read plenty of slightly older ones, and our respect for The Novel as an idea increases steadily—just as poetry is read, by those who read it at all, with greater seriousness than ever before. It may be that our rigorous demands on art, our overriding concern with masterpieces has, as Randall Jarrell points out, discouraged the creative efforts of the finer spirits among us (the grosser would not be affected). Malcolm Cowley complains, for example, that the young poets and novelists write with one eye on the critics. Yet such virtues as ours, if they bear fruit, should bear the finest. Perhaps this generation, unlike the last, will age well. Perhaps our writers, derivative in their precocious work, will find their own manner (Saul Bellow's *Augie March* is a step in this direction) and produce their best work in maturity. Perhaps, after all, we have been these last ten years in a state of suspension, waiting to see whether the Bomb is going to fall or not—whether we must let our silence speak for us as the only ultimate expression of despair, or whether we can release that joy wherein lies, I firmly believe, the spring of our originality if only circumstances allow us to tap it.

The Possibilities of Heroism

DAVID DAICHES

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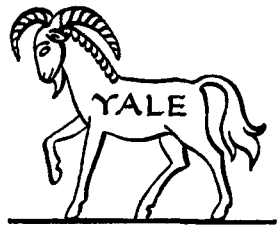

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heroic destiny, whether tragic like that of Oedipus or epic like that of Aeneas, and his destiny was bound up with those aspects of his character which gave him moral stature and physical courage. Only the folk tradition, in its iconoclastic wisdom, occasionally protested against the assumption that destiny is determined by quality of personality, and threw up stories of feckless younger sons or irresponsible paupers who achieved a hero's reward through sheer luck. A more sophisticated age, looking for substitutes for conventional heroes in whom it can no longer believe, will turn with relief to these fools and paupers, as Yeats did in his later poetry or, on a different level, Kingsley Amis did in his novel, *Lucky Jim*; for Yeats, the fool symbolizes the paradox of ultimate wisdom; for Amis, the hero as clown is a commentary on the fatuity of the world.

Prudence and knowledge are the enemies of heroism, and the hero in modern literature has succumbed to a series of attacks, first by the former and then by the latter. Too intimate a knowledge of a hero inevitably reduces his stature. No man is a hero to his valet—or to his psychoanalyst. Oedipus remains a hero so long as he is not simply suffering from an Oedipus complex; once we learn to explain him in terms of repressed hopes and fears, traumatic childhood experiences, or a vitamin deficiency in infancy, he may remain *interesting* (indeed, he will gain a new kind of interest) but he loses *stature*. As for prudence, that is always the ultimate destroyer of a heroic age. Arthur's knights remain heroic because nobody (at least, nobody before Mark Twain) stands outside their world to question the prudence of their exploits. Don Quixote is less fortunate; standing between the feudal period and a more modern commercial age, he is exposed to the voice of prudence, which reduces his chivalry to folly. Yet his is a noble folly; he is ridiculously deluded, but the delusion of a man who prefers to live in a lost heroic world rather than face the realities of a contemporary prudential one has something admirable about it—or so we can afford to feel once that lost world is so far away as to be no longer a threat to our modern self-interest. Don Quixote is a transitional figure, seeking the "crowded hour of glorious life" in a civilization which has only recently given up that sort of thing. As we leave the feudal age farther and farther behind and move through commercial toward industrial civilization, we note the emergence of a new kind of hero, the prudential hero, of whom Robinson Crusoe is the first important example in English literature. The hero whose motives are prudential rather than selfless, or who seeks safety rather than glory, can never appeal to the imagination as the older species of hero could (Ulysses is perhaps an exception, but I have not space to explain why I think he manages to retain his heroic appeal in spite of his cunning self-interest); and romantic attempts to revive the older hero provide an interesting testimony to man's reluctance to accept prudence as an ideal. The romantic historical novel is an attempt to create a world in which the old kind of hero is still possible; and the genre is still with us, though not respectable. The other way was to find new kinds of heroes—men of good heart, like Tom Jones and Mr. Pickwick; Ulysses as businessman, like Scott's Baillie Nicol Jarvie; incomplete personalities who are completed and improved by experience, like (in very different ways) Pendennis and Gwendolyn Harleth; reformers, like Felix Holt; victims of fate, like Tess, or of society, like Ernest Pontifex; and many other varieties. The novelist survived the age of prudence. He even found ways of making prudence heroic, and where he could not do that he found new ways of giving stature to his characters. A character could even achieve a certain symbolic stature by being kicked around long enough, not like patient Griselda, who was after all demonstrating moral virtue, but like a mere football illustrating the wayward athleticism of fate.

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The story of the fictional hero in the age of prudence is fascinating. Even when the prudential hero—the Robinson Crusoe or Samuel Smiles type—was finally found out by the Victorians as a hypocrite or a villain, a large number of new heroic types survived. Knowledge has proved a more fatal enemy. *Tout comprendre c'est tout pardonner* says the French proverb, "To understand all is to forgive all"; but it is also to reduce all characters to a dead level of interest. Anglo-American fiction of the last ten years has tried hard to come to terms with psychological and other kinds of knowledge. The problem was posed by the novelists of the 1920's; in the thirties and early forties the pressure of public affairs deflected the novelists from the problem altogether. They have returned to it recently with interesting results.

Before discussing some of these results I must try to make the problem explicit. New psychological knowledge posed problems for novelists concerned with the presentation of character; it also troubled those who were concerned with the moral pattern of their work. We know, or we think we know, so much about psychological conditioning, about the psychosomatic aspects of illness, about the relationship of childhood frustrations and adult vices, that we are in danger of being unable to pass any moral judgment on individuals. This man committed rape or murder, but we know that he saw something terrible in the woodshed when he was three, was brought up in a slum without orange juice and cod-liver oil, was bullied by a drunken stepfather, had his emotions and instincts warped in this way or that; how, then, can we blame him for what he was eventually driven to do? If our moral judgments are to be dissolved in psychological understanding, how can we pattern a tragedy or create in literature characters who have true stature? Certainly, a behaviorist psychology—using this term in the widest sense—leaves little room for an appraisal of personality as such; and without an appraisal of personality as such, why should Hamlet's death be any more significant than that of Polonius?

That is one aspect of the problem. Another is that the more we know about the individual consciousness, the more complex and lonely it appears; and the less revealing of our true selves are those public gestures that the need to attempt to communicate with others forces on us. The eighteenth- and nineteenth-century novelists for the most part saw their characters publicly, as it were; saw their fate adequately reflected in changes of fortune or social status; allowed them to experience nothing that was not both communicable by themselves and capable of being symbolized by some publicly visible action. The great theme of the English novel in the nineteenth century was the relation between gentility and morality; but the English novelist of the twenties was concerned with the relation between loneliness and love. Consciousness is the sum of one's previous private emotional history; we are each the prisoner of our own subconscious; how, then, is communication possible? Not only the artist, but all individuals are alienated from society—Leopold Bloom as much as Stephen Dedalus, Mrs. Dalloway as much as Septimus Warren Smith. We seek rituals of communication in parties and pubs: one aspect of modern man as seen by novelists and short-story writers is symbolized by the *New Yorker* cartoon which showed a bartender offering a microphone to a customer and saying, "If you will record your troubles into the machine, sir, I will listen to them as soon as I have a moment."

The novelists of the twenties sometimes tried to solve the problem by limitation of the context: at most you could, in E. M. Forster's terms, be a member of the "little society" as opposed to the deceptive "great society." For Forster, as for D. H. Lawrence, the "great society" is always the enemy. It is not a question of how to reform the great society, as it was in Dickens—"O, reform it altogether." Lawrence's concern was with how individuals could fully realize themselves as individuals as a preliminary to making true contact with the "otherness" of another individual. That was as far as you could go. But the contemporary novelist cannot even go so far as that. The hero of L. P. Hartley's novel, *The Go-Between*,

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is a boy moving about in a world of adults and creating out of his own responses to that world something which exists only in his own mind. In America, the hero of Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* moves in a world to whose conventional gestures he finds himself unable to make any public response whatsoever. The number of recent novels and short stories dealing with children and adolescents moving about in worlds half-realized indicates the degree to which the question of loneliness and love has come to haunt the modern imagination: the child in a grown-up world is the proper symbol of man in society, surrounded by the public masks of others just as he himself presents to others his own public mask. In the 1920's you found salvation—if you were lucky—in the little society; in the 1950's the little society is no better than the great society; you are as lonely in a bar as in a ballroom. You can grow out of the problem by becoming more of an extrovert, like the heroine of *A Member of the Wedding* at the end of the story; but the problem will be waiting for you around the next corner.

Knowledge thus dissolves value in explanation and substitutes inevitable loneliness for communion. The dissolution of value makes heroic stature impossible; but what about loneliness? Is not one kind of hero essentially the lonely man? He is, when his loneliness results from his being above his fellows: it is Oedipus' paternal attitude toward his people that dooms him to isolation. But if all the others are lonely too, and lonely in the same way—if we are all members of the lonely crowd—loneliness cannot confer heroic status. One way out is to make your loneliness into a Bohemian glory, give Stephen Dedalus enough to drink and give him a taste for practical jokes—combine him with Buck Mulligan, in fact—and you get someone like Joyce Carey's artist Jimson. But Jimson's Bohemian heroics are not wholly convincing: they do not belong, we feel, to our world. Another way is to see man not within society but against nature. Here Hemingway's

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The Old Man and the Sea is interesting, for Hemingway is a secret society man from way back, seeking in his earlier novels to find a select heroic environment to set against the shoddiness of modern urban life. The trouble with *Across the River and into the Trees* is that, in his perennial search for heroism in the modern world, Hemingway was incautious enough to try to combine the stoical and the matey, the Suffering Servant and the bar fly, as though one could have at the same time the dignity of isolation, the cameraderie of the really *tiny* secret society (you, your girl and the barkeeper) and the comfort of confession. In *The Old Man and the Sea* he is content with a wholly elemental situation, narrated with a ritualistic precision. The old man has the boy, but on his ordeal he is alone with the big fish. Man's truest communion is not with his own kind, but with the inhuman forces of nature which he both fights and loves. You get back your hero this way, it is true, but at the cost of abandoning the depth and complexity that modern literature has worked so hard to attain. The recent tendency to approximate literature to myth—myth being literature as emblem rather than as exploration—involves a kind of surrender, an admission of inability to cope adequately with the richness of modern knowledge; but it has its compensations.

The American writer—haunted, I suspect, by that same yearning for a lost heroic way of life that we find so magnificently expressed in Mark Twain's *Life on the Mississippi*, with its contrast between the old days of river heroism and the new railroad age—has been more reluctant to give up the hero than the British. Even the toughest American prober into the jungle of human history, society and psychology—even Faulkner himself—insists on a moral pattern, on a meaning, on at least a potential heroism, even if he has to inflate his language in order to suggest it. The British have been more content to accept what might be

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called the "anti-hero." The early novels of Aldous Huxley presented him often, and he is a staple figure in the novels of Evelyn Waugh. This kind of hero is related to the hero as victim whom we find in Butler's *Way of All Flesh.* But we are asked to laugh at him—as we laugh at Paul Pennyfeather in Waugh's *Decline and Fall*—rather than to pity him, even though the laughter has masochistic overtones. Idealism emerges as mere ignorance, innocence as a dangerous lack of sophistication, with the virtuous anti-hero the complacent tool of sophisticated vice, as Paul Pennyfeather finds himself (without knowing what it is all about) organizing the white slave traffic. If you try behaving like an old-fashioned hero, as the hero of *Men at Arms* does when he goes on an unauthorized and dangerous private raid on the enemy coast, you will find yourself court-martialed and demoted. This can be hilariously funny in the hands of a witty and skillful writer like Waugh. Interest is sustained by a gallery of nostalgic eccentrics who are sometimes funny (like Apthrope in *Men at Arms*) and sometimes pathetic. We feel this most in *Brideshead Revisited,* in whose first chapter the nostalgic note swells out as never before in Waugh's novels. Here the cruelly farcical coincidences of many of the earlier novels give way to suggestions of a lost world lying dimly behind the feverish gestures of valueless modern life. Religion, the old Catholic religion, is presented in Waugh's later novels not as a living source of spiritual values which can redeem the modern wasteland, but as what might perhaps be called the stiff upper lip of the soul; it gives the believer dignity of bearing, like wearing evening dress in the jungle. Thus religion provides aristocratic gestures to shore against the ruins (quite Hemingway-like, really). This is an odd use of religion in fiction, but perhaps no odder than the more serious use of it made by Graham Greene, another Catholic novelist, who seems concerned with showing the essential incompatibility between human de-

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cency and theological virtue: the decent thing is, literally, damnable, or if not absolutely damnable, it is (like the hero's behavior in *The Heart of the Matter*) only doubtfully exempted.

Waugh is a satirist, but knowledge can dissolve blame as well as praise. Angus Wilson's *Hemlock and After* moves from satire to diagnosis, and in the end we know all and cannot blame anybody. Sheer malice, accompanied by brilliant wit, can create a sort of a world—witness Mary McCarthy's *Groves of Academe*—but you must have more than wit and malice to convince the reader of that world's importance. Swift was passionately concerned about man, and his villains are the anti-types of potential heroes; but we have the impression that Mary McCarthy doesn't give a damn for *la condition humaine* anyway, which may not be true, of course, but which makes her hero-less novel somewhat dreary in the last analysis. Randall Jarrell's *Pictures from an Institution,* another academic satire, is all done with mirrors, the author creating a character who wisecracks about the other characters; and this would seem a good way to achieve some success with a hero-less world; but old-fashioned heroism emerges in spite of Mr. Jarrell's satiric intentions, and there is a discrepancy between what he knows and what he esteems. *Lucky Jim,* a very different English academic novel, is based on sheer nihilism, and the clowning hero stands for nothing but himself, the fortunate fool, which is funny but not satisfying.

Can a man be seen as a hero if we know him better than he knows himself? Can the individual come to terms with his loneliness and achieve moral stature in spite of—or because of—his isolation, which he shares with his fellows? These seem to me to be the themes with which the Anglo-American novel in the last decade or so has been most fruitfully concerned. In the last analysis, the question is: What has civilization done for us? The modern novelist, unlike some of his predecessors, does not know the answer; but he has achieved some searching ways of posing the question.

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Other Voices

CARVEL COLLINS

When the invitation to write an article for this issue of the SCHOLAR arrived, I had been examining American literature with a number of Europeans in Austria and in the south of France and was on my way to interview the perceptive editor of *Botteghe Oscure*, certainly one of today's best literary journals. It has long been pointed out that we discover America when we are away from it, and these various European views of our writing convinced me that one of the interesting features of the literary situation since the Second World War is a conflict going on in the United States over our fiction.

At the core of the conflict seems to be a difference of opinion about the purposes of fiction. Many readers, and many critics very influential in the more popular literary press, maintain, in part unconsciously, that serious fiction should be educational and reportorial, that it should act very directly in giving the reader information as well as uplift of an immediately measurable kind, and this without much work on his part. Others feel that fiction is an art, that it need not necessarily educate the reader factually, that it may legitimately demand a great deal of his attention and, indeed, energetic co-operation.

This disagreement about fiction is in part the product of a great change which has taken place in the fiction itself: literary naturalism, which dominated the American novel for more than forty years, has lost its dominance. Though the change began earlier, it has made itself fully apparent only since the end of the Second World War.

Naturalism rose in Europe during the mid-nineteenth century, and by 1900 our authors had begun to adapt it to the American setting. Stemming from the surge of investigation by the biological and, especially, the social Darwinians, naturalistic fiction gave less attention to the individual than to his surroundings. The novels often were very long so the author could report in considerable detail the nature of a region or a society. A lack of emphasis on art often accompanied this emphasis on reporting. Frank Norris' expressed attitude was style be damned, it's the truth we're after. Many other naturalists shared with him this belief that the way a novelist writes is separate from what he says. Thus, in its artistic elements, naturalistic fiction often had the crudity which it also showed at times in its rather oversimplified adaptation of scientific theories.

During the nineteenth century and the early years of the twentieth, of course, opposing kinds of fiction existed side by side with naturalism; and through the twenties, thirties and early forties, the dominance of naturalism was challenged in many ways. The fiction of Joyce, for example, attracted its large following; Henry James's work revived and flourished; Dostoevsky's novels became widely admired. But in the years before the Second World War many of the most highly regarded American novels were still written from a naturalistic base and had more kinship with *L'Assommoir* than with *The Wings of the Dove* or *Ulysses*.

But since the war and in spite of the fact that many of the novels about the war have been naturalistic, it is not naturalism which interests most of the young writers or the untried would-be writers whom one sees every day as a college English teacher. Good and effective as many of the naturalistic novels were and much as they did to free fiction from confining limits of subject and technique, they do not have today the attraction they had before the war. As soon after the German and Japanese surrender as 1947, Newton Arvin, in one of the earliest and certainly one of the best treatments

✪ Associate professor of literature at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, CARVEL COLLINS is interested in general American culture, having published books on American sports and the gold rush, as well as numerous shorter studies of our poetry and fiction.

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of the subject, was able to point to this change which he saw taking place and to make predictions for the future, predictions which have been coming true.

The main point is that though naturalism was once central in the fiction of our century, twentieth-century poetry has followed a quite different path, and increased numbers of our new novelists have been abandoning naturalism to move toward the way of poetry. Naturalistic fiction was concerned with society and how things were done; most of twentieth-century poetry has been concerned with the individual. Where fiction dominated by naturalism was reportorial and interested in the external, our poetry has been subjective and concerned with the events of the inner life. The naturalistic novelists, affected by evolutionary theory, often played down the mind and the special developments which differentiate man from the other animals; most of the poets, meanwhile, have stressed man's complexities and subtleties. Naturalistic fiction was often awkward in style and loose in form; our poetry has been very concerned with style and with unified, aesthetically efficient structures. Most naturalistic novels were simple in arrangement, accumulative and chronological; modern poetry more often has taken advantage of the intensity and drama of less "realistic" sequence. While naturalistic novels frequently made only the most blunt use of large and tacked-on symbols, twentieth-century poems—and the new fiction which has been allying itself with them—have attempted to use subtle symbols integrated with the core of the work.

The fiction which has replaced naturalism and has taken on these characteristics of modern poetry is by no means always good. Its most common fault is that in its concern for form and style it sometimes seems to be saying very little, no matter how well. And in its abandonment of large general sociological externals it sometimes examines the subjective in so private a manner that it communicates almost nothing. But the presence of poor workers in any mode need not drive us to discredit that mode, and certainly the newly dominant

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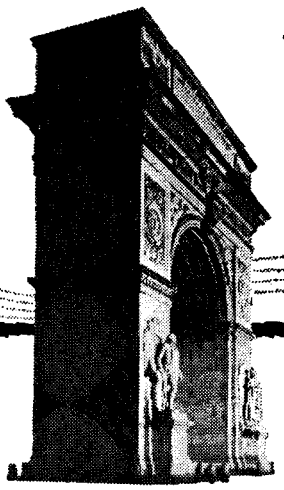

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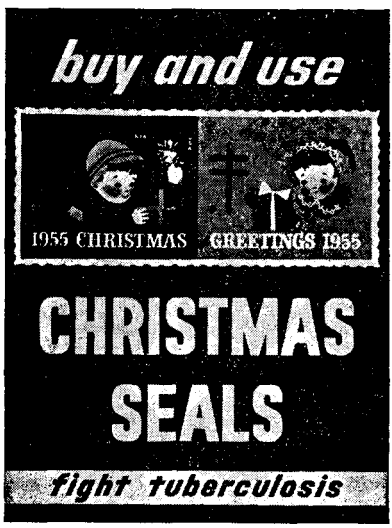

fiction has produced many works of good quality and promises much for the future.

The opponents in the conflict over our fiction seem to be drawn up on these lines: Many who for two or three decades or more have given their attention primarily to the novel tend to demand that it continue to be naturalistic, as it was when they established their critical concepts. The other side includes younger critics and readers and those older ones who at first had given most of their attention to poetry and only in the years since the war turned to a critical examination of fiction.

As an example of the difficulties which training and experience have created for those of us who were reared on the naturalistic novel but must deal with fiction of a different kind, let us take simply the tendency to expect a novel to inform the reader about the region where it is set. Farrell's naturalistic *Studs Lonigan* told a great deal about the south side of Chicago, just as *The Octopus* had told about the San Joaquin Valley, which Norris had visited, complete with notebook. Members of the naturalistic camp have the feeling that other novels should do the same and, in fact, are usually intended to do so. But this is often a false demand, and criticism based on it and on related requirements left over from the long and once rather undisturbed reign of naturalism is frequently meaningless and sometimes actively harmful.

For example, naturalistic critics before the war considered Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* to be a novel which existed to describe a section of Mississippi but which went about that task by a method much too complicated. Along with other faults, it did not follow a chronological arrangement of events and was thus more difficult to read than standard naturalistic fiction, to which it was considered closely related. So those critics damned *The Sound and the Fury*, and some of them even suggested elaborate revisions to make the novel conventionally naturalistic and, therefore, better. Since the war, with the decline of naturalism at last clearly apparent, readers of other persuasions, re-examining *The*

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Sound and the Fury in a non-naturalistic light, have demonstrated that it is not by any means primarily about the sociology or history of its region, but merely uses that region as a setting in its concern with much more universal human matters—which it presents quite meaningfully by a non-chronological arrangement and other devices remote from naturalistic practice. But I do not want to discuss Faulkner's works here, even though the history of their reception since 1926 contains useful illustrations of the point I should like to make.

Instead, I want to take as an example—indeed, an extreme one—a novel written since the war by a much-discussed member of the postwar generation: *Other Voices, Other Rooms* by Truman Capote. Since its publication in 1948 it has had some praise, but readers of the naturalistic persuasion have attacked it. One of their objections has been that the novel is an absurd distortion of the region in which it is set. I do not want to discuss here whether *Other Voices, Other Rooms* is a good novel, but I do think that, like other novels of its general sort, it should be evaluated on grounds other than its portrayal of a region. And I hope that the observations made here about the misreading of this novel can be applied in a less exaggerated way to the widespread misreading of other novels which are not in the naturalistic tradition.

Other Voices, Other Rooms is the account of Joel Knox's adolescent effort to develop into normal masculine adulthood. After his mother's death in New Orleans, he goes to Skully's Landing, a plantation north of Biloxi, Mississippi, where he joins his father, a bedridden paralytic; his father's second wife, a weak and half-mad spinster who married him after he was paralyzed; his stepmother's cousin Randolph, a perverted dilettante; Idabel, a tomboy who lives down the road; and a Negro cook who has recovered physically but not spiritually from having her throat cut. A series of bizarre and often horrifying events takes place on the idle, decayed plantation and at the frightening, crumbling Cloud Hotel, a nearby summer

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resort long abandoned except for a hermit caretaker named Little Sunshine.

Naturalistic readers seem to be on the right track when they feel that this novel does not give an accurate cross section of Mississippi life. But a different kind of examination of the novel suggests another possibility altogether. *Other Voices, Other Rooms* probably should not be required to give an analysis of Mississippi or a report on Southern agriculture nor be judged by how well or poorly it does so, for it seems to be centered on an adaptation of the quest for the Holy Grail and, as such, to have other work to do.

T. S. Eliot's *The Waste Land*, a major document in the poetry with which much of our newer fiction has become allied, is, among other things, an adaptation of the Grail legends. In developing this adaptation Eliot specifically indebted his poem to Jessie L. Weston's *From Ritual to Romance* (1920), and his emphasis on that scholar's book in his notes has led many of his readers to examine it. Miss Weston's theory—sharply debated by folklorists—is that the Grail and Lance as we know them are medieval Christian adaptations of symbols from ancient nature cults, symbols central to primitive worship of the fertility of nature and man. She sets out the view that these two objects, Christianized as the cup from which Christ drank at the Last Supper and the spear which pierced His side on the Cross, were originally symbols of the female and male reproductive principles in fertility rites. As such, she says, they were probably associated with ceremonies by which youths were initiated into adult manhood; and when such medieval artists as Guyot, Chrétien de Troyes, and Wolfram wrote romances about the Grail quests of Percival, Gawain, and other youths, they reworked but still retained the episodes and structure of the ancient initiation.

Because Miss Weston's book is a well-known, essential document for anyone interested in the most argued-about poem by the most talked-about modern poet, it is quite easy to believe that Capote knew of this sort of thing when writing *Other Voices, Other Rooms*. A detailed examination of the novel in this light seems to confirm it.

The Grail questors in many versions of the legend were reared by their mothers away from their warrior fathers, of whose existence they often were unaware. Joel Knox in Capote's novel, living with his mother in New Orleans until her death, knows nothing of his father (who was associated with professional boxing) and even, as in some Grail romances, bears a different name. Either at the death of the mother as they were approaching the age of manhood or just because they were approaching that age, the questors, like Joel, left their childhood home. In most versions they came to a place where life was sterile and the king was injured and immobilized, his paralysis central to the wasting away of the land around him. Sometimes this king was the questor's father. Joel, in modern parallel, finds his father, of whom he has just begun to expect so much, lying injured and paralyzed at the center of the suspended life at Skully's Landing (and letting drop down the stairs those by now famous red tennis balls, which may possibly have been suggested by the drops of blood which sometimes fell from the paralyzed or dead king of the legends).

In many Grail romances if the heroes would only ask the significant questions, the paralyzed king would recover and the land come back to life, but they hesitated to question—as does Joel. And so the parallel goes on, with Idabel like a maiden of the Grail romances, even complete with her much loved dog, with Joel's initial period of deep sleep and longer period of unconsciousness like the magic sleeps of the questors, and scores of other duplicated motifs large and small.

The questors, accompanied by the maiden, often had to cross a bridge to the tower or castle which housed the Grail, just as Joel has to cross the beam over the river with Idabel to reach the Cloud Hotel where the hermit will give him a charm to "guarantee no turrible happenins gonna happen"—which had been the parallel function of the charmed Grail in the legends.

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Joel starts to cross; but though he bears a sword which, like the swords of the questors, has come down from older generations at the house of the paralyzed king, he fails the test of his awakening manhood when a large cottonmouth, dragon-like, bars the bridge. The girl has to take the sword and dispatch the snake. At this bridge Joel turns back.

Near the end of the novel, though by now too late, Joel is taken to the Hotel, riding on a mule with Cousin Randolph, whose starched linen suit is "like medieval armor." The Hotel is reminiscent of the frightening building of the Grail romances. It is a place of hallucination which is more terrifying than dragons because it attacks the questor's mind. As Mr. Kenneth Marks has helpfully pointed out to me, in the Grail romances one of the most frightening obstacles is a mysterious and horrifying hand; in the novel the Hotel is vacant and decayed because rumors that a frightening hand rose from the lake have long ago driven away the summer customers of Mrs. Cloud's resort.

The Cloud Hotel bears further similarities to the castle or tower of the Grail, for the exterior and the first rooms are in wreckage, but at the heart of the building, where the Grail was to be found, is an impeccable apartment. The other details pile up, and none seems to contradict the parallel. Whether it is the graves along the route to the Hotel, the mysterious "lady" Joel sees at the Landing, the maiden Idabel's truculence, or many others, they have their counterpart in Grail romance. So it seems quite likely that by way of Eliot's famous poem, Miss Weston's book with its theories, and his own exposure to the tales of King Arthur's knights, Capote found much of the structure and episode for his novel.

Capote has never said this so far as I know, and one assumes he would deny it just as ironically as he has denied other literary influence: when a reporter told him reviewers were saying that *Other Voices, Other Rooms* reminded them of the work of various authors, including Welty, McCullers, Cather and Poe, he replied, "Some day I hope to read some of those writers." But whether or not he would concede the Grail parallel, it is certainly there. And one of the advantages of noticing its presence is that we will profit more by regarding the plantation with its frozen life as the Waste Land of legend, and the Cloud Hotel as the Dark Tower of the Grail, than as materials in a social study of the region a few miles north of Biloxi.

Joel, struggling against difficulties, is attempting to go through the episodes of initiation and grow into manhood. But the opposition is too great for him and he does not succeed in the quest. His failure is pointed up by the author's selecting and arranging its events to parallel the events which once led to the success of ancient heroes. This device we see again and again in twentieth-century poetry and non-naturalistic fiction. In Joyce's *Ulysses* and *Dubliners* the central characters in their failure are systematically contrasted with Odysseus in his ultimate success. In Faulkner's *The Sound and the Fury* and *Light in August* the modern protagonists follow a path similar to Christ's, but it leads down where His led up, which makes their failure more emphatic and the reasons for it more clear.

By moving away from the naturalistic concept of fiction and recognizing that novels such as *Other Voices, Other Rooms* are created in a quite different convention, we are able to drop the confining requirement—often hidden or at least not fully recognized—that a novel be reportorial, documentary. Then we can turn to more meaningful, and often more difficult, problems.

And there are many such problems in *Other Voices, Other Rooms*: Is it effective to present Joel's unfortunate development by the carefully detailed symbolic and mythic parallel outlined here? Can the reader profit from the novel's use of this parallel even if no one has pointed it out? Now that the parallel is pointed out can the reader profit from it even though he does not know most of its details? Is the style successful or too synthetic? Does the novel's treatment of Joel Knox's development seem valid? Or interesting? Is the novel a trag-

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edy? Or an excuse? Or neither? There are scores of other questions whose answers might help us come closer to assessing the value of this book. But we will never get around to them if consciously or unconsciously our standard remains the naturalistic novel, dominant for decades but toppled since the war.

Brief Comments

ECONOMICS AND ACTION. By Pierre Mendes-France and Gabriel Ardant. *Columbia. $3.50.*

This is an interesting little book, with France's former premier one of the authors. The authors travel lightly but skillfully over the whole terrain of economics from the classical theory of equilibrium to Keynesian economics of full employment, to the problems of equilibrium under a collectivist regime; and they tie their analysis to history.

According to these authors, classical economics has its limitations. The market does not work perfectly; unemployment and imbalance between production and sales are part of the free enterprise system; choice should be not merely a matter of importance for the individual but also for the government, which has certain responsibilities for allocating resources and stimulating employment. In analyzing the period between 1931 and 1936 for several countries, the authors show that expansionist policies by government greatly reduced the costs of depression. They even contend that a penchant for economic fallacy in pre-Hitler Germany contributed greatly to World War II. In an interesting discussion of inflation it is shown that in periods of postwar shortages, stronger anti-inflationary measures may be required; and often in the struggle to contain inflation it may be necessary to have recourse to compulsory savings, rationing and other unorthodox measures.

SEYMOUR E. HARRIS

THE MARSHALL PLAN AND ITS MEANING. By Harry Bayard Price. *Cornell. $5.00.*

In 1951, President Truman directed federal agencies engaged in emergency activities to prepare histories of their endeavors. The Economic Cooperation Administration, which administered the Marshall Plan, thereupon invited the Governmental Affairs Institute, a private research organization, to prepare this objective history and evaluation.

Its 400 pages contain a broad sketch of the critical international setting from which the Marshall Plan emerged; a detailed account of its inception, adoption and four-year operation; a relatively brief outline of the concurrent but separate programs of American aid to China, Korea and Southeast Asia; and in its second half, an appraisal of the effectiveness of these unprecedented efforts, and a statement of their significance in meeting similar challenges in the future. In preparation of this book, Mr. Price interviewed some 300 knowledgeable persons here and abroad; and much of its material, by way of facts and judgments, is drawn, often as direct quotation, from these interviews.

This book, however, is by no means a mere compilation: thoughtfully organized and straightforwardly written, it will be most valuable to those engaged in future programs resembling the Marshall Plan, and of considerable interest to students of contemporary international affairs.

NATHAN KATZ

HIROSHIMA DIARY. By Michihiko Hachiya. Edited and translated by Warner Wells. *North Carolina. $3.50.*

Dr. Michihiko Hachiya's straightforward account of his experiences on August 6, 1945, the day the atom bomb fell, and during the ensuing eight weeks is strongly reminiscent of John Hersey's account. It is remarkable that *Hiroshima Diary* was written at all, for in addition to being injured himself, Dr. Hachiya was the director of Hiroshima's Communications Hospital and enormously busy from the moment he was able to stand on his feet again.

Americans who consider the Japanese

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inscrutable and impassive will find that this book reveals an articulate, kindly and extremely frank man. Dr. Hachiya, who has not taken a diarist's opportunity to conceal his mistakes, seems to have achieved an excellent balance between East and West in his own personality. Essentially, he is neither an optimist nor a pessimist, but a rational man trying to make sense out of a baffling experience. His attempts, without outside aid or special knowledge, to diagnose the illness which struck seemingly well patients provide the main drama of the diary. This book must be one of the few in any language which explains the effects of radiation in the graphic, personal terms a layman can understand.

It is a welcome change to read a judicious book about Hiroshima by a moderate Japanese, for the subject has been exploited by Japan's professional peace-wagers, mainly people miles away from where Dr. Hachiya stood on the day the bomb fell. With the help of Dr. Neal Tsukifuji, Dr. Warner Wells has done his work so well that it is hard to realize *Hiroshima Diary* is a translation.

DALLAS FINN

THE SUPREME COURT IN THE AMERICAN SYSTEM OF GOVERNMENT. By Robert H. Jackson. *Harvard. $2.00.*

This little volume contains advanced drafts of the three Godkin lectures which the late Justice Jackson was to have delivered at Harvard. The first lecture explores the legal, political and practical limitations upon the Supreme Court's independence. The second, more technical than the other two, considers the jurisdiction of the Court as a conventional law court with examples of the types of cases which make up a major portion of its docket. The final lecture examines the Court as a political institution arbitrating controversies in many of the most important and sensitive areas of our national life.

Though a subject so vast can only be summarized briefly in these few pages, the last lecture particularly, with its insight into the judicial resolution of conflicting forces in our democracy, inspires confidence in the operations of the Court, imperfect though they sometimes be, and regret at the sudden death of one of the most eloquent champions of the philosophy of government under law.

DAVID L. MARKS

NINE MEN: A Political History of the Supreme Court of the United States from 1790 to 1955. By Fred Rodell. *Random House. $5.00.*

This is two books combined in one. In his first 250 pages, Fred Rodell tells the story of the United States Supreme Court as a political institution and describes, without resort to conventional legal folderol, the work of its most forceful judges as political action. The last 80 pages are a brilliant piece of pamphleteering on the business of the Supreme Court since 1941, in the form of brief biographical sketches and a running commentary on decisions written by various judges and important questions ducked with the magic formula of "certiorari denied."

Contemporary students have proved the soundness of the apprehensions of Jefferson, Jackson and Lincoln regarding the belief that the words of the Constitution would furnish an automatic touchstone for the judicial decision of issues of great public importance. It has been demonstrated that precedents, in this field, have their greatest use not in helping decide cases, but in giving a spurious illusion of necessity to those decisions previously reached on the basis of unexpressed convictions as to desirable policy and in making written opinions appear to be historically correct.

However, the scholarship which makes this once heretical interpretation a truism is buried in arid treatises and in the pages of unread law reviews. Professor Rodell has performed a valuable service in giving a realistic description, in language the layman can readily follow, of the work the Supreme Court actually does and of the factors which determine the course of decision. While its correlation of opinion with personal economic and political background is oversimplified, his book is unsurpassed as a primer. The style is so clear that it is easy to overlook the erudition the

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author uses with consummate ease. Moreover, unlike most writers in this field, Rodell openly recognizes and states his own prejudices.

ASHER B. LANS

REBELS AND DEMOCRATS: The Struggle for Equal Rights and Majority Rule During the American Revolution. By Elisha P. Douglass. *North Carolina.* $5.00.

Here is a welcome antidote to the recent overemphasis on the conservative aspects of the American Revolution. Convinced that the separation from Great Britain produced a "conflict of ideologies," Mr. Douglass examines with thoroughness, judiciousness and skill, the democratic impulses of the era as they expressed themselves in movements for equal political rights and for majority rule. Although he surveys all of the new commonwealths, his attention naturally centers in the constitutions framed between 1776 and 1780 for North Carolina, Massachusetts and Pennsylvania, where, alone, the democratic forces mustered sufficient strength to influence public policy. Lacking leadership and an attractive program, the democrats of North Carolina ultimately gave way to the old ruling class in 1776; somewhat anomalously, under conservative guidance, the already democratic society of Massachusetts evolved machinery for embodying popular will in fundamental law which is now accepted everywhere; only in Pennsylvania did the democratic element actually win control of the government and push through its program. The discussion of political ideas is, unfortunately, much less illuminating.

Controversial, not in tone, but in emphasis and conclusions, *Rebels and Democrats* is a challenging study that will doubtless stimulate other scholars to a more searching analysis of the actual views of the "Whig leaders."

CARL BRIDENBAUGH

THE NORTH REPORTS THE CIVIL WAR. By J. Cutler Andrews. Illustrated. *Pittsburgh.* $6.00.

Before the Second World War had reached its climax, Frank Luther Mott published his *American Journalism* in which he claimed that "probably no great war has ever been so thoroughly covered by eyewitness correspondents as the American Civil War." This statement, issued casually but succinctly, now has been documented in fine detail by Mr. Andrews. Almost a fifth of the encyclopedic text is devoted to quotations from the Civil War newspapers. This is a narrative rather than an analytical account of the men who reported the war. And although there is little accompanying interpretation, nothing has been left to the imagination.

The problems of the "special"—as the Civil War reporter was called—were many. The job was a new one, the pressure of competition was severe, and seldom did the "special" have proper facilities. He dealt with horse thieves, defiant generals, inept censorship and always faced the threat of sickness or death and discomfort. The reporter's position with the armies was usually unclear; the man himself often unwanted. Sherman would have nothing to do with the press if he could help it. General McClellan, however, was of a different opinion, and one of the first things he did as commander of the Army of the Potomac was to invite the "specials" to his headquarters. Thus was "young Napoleon" born.

There are almost one hundred pages of footnotes and an extensive bibliography, all of which indicate the tremendous size of this volume which has enough material in it for yet another book analyzing the role of the "special" in the Civil War.

DONALD N. BIGELOW

TEXAS FOLK AND FOLKLORE. Edited by Mody C. Boatright, Wilson M. Hudson and Allen Maxwell. *Southern Methodist.* $5.00.

Texas and Texans being what they are, almost any volume of selections from the twenty-five publications of the Texas Folklore Society is bound to be rich in human and regional, as well as folklore, interest. The present treasury is a well-balanced representation of the major folklore types and cultural areas of Texas, from Indian,

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Mexican, and Negro tales to "Paul Bunyan: Oil Man," from *corridos* to rope-jumping rhymes. The variety and scope of the contents are indicated by such contributors as Roy Bedichek, Mody C. Boatright, J. Frank Dobie, John A. Lomax and Walter Prescott Webb, writing, respectively, on the folklore of natural history, oil motifs, treasure and mustang legends, Sin-Killer Griffin's Calvary sermon, and Sam Bass. The volume is dedicated to Dobie, for twenty years the Society's editor, through whose example and influence the Society's emblem, the *paisano* ("fellow-countryman") or road runner, has come to symbolize the Texan's pride in his folk heritage and in being "folks." My only criticism is that with so much Texas money lying around no one saw to it that the tunes were printed along with the texts of songs.

B. A. BOTKIN

THE SELF AND THE DRAMAS OF HISTORY. By Reinhold Niebuhr. *Scribner's. $3.75.*

Dr. Niebuhr, acknowledging his indebtedness to Martin Buber, here makes a further contribution of his own toward a better understanding of man and society. The first section defines Dr. Niebuhr's conception of the humanity of man. Next the author analyzes the error into which many thinkers have fallen by failing to comprehend man's unique nature. Finally, Dr. Niebuhr describes the way in which the humanity of man is gradually asserting itself toward an adjustment that will make society more viable.

The uniqueness of man is his self, that part of him which has a transcendent dimension and perception, which is superior to and can dominate his body, his emotions and his mind. The self is in dialogue with itself, criticizing what it has willed; with others, recognizing the selfhood of others and desiring to be recognized, and finding fulfillment by projecting itself into others; and with God, wherein it recognizes the meaning of the Crucifixion.

The self, being in time and space and yet superior to them, is completely free. It is the failure to comprehend this freedom—the tendency to predicate systems or to rationalize observed phenomena on the premise that man's actions and reactions will follow a foreseeable pattern—that accounts for the shortcomings of many social, economic and philosophical systems. "The dialogues in which the self is involved are transmuted into dramas whenever they precipitate action," says Dr. Niebuhr. And the attempt to use these dramas to sustain a rigid, preconceived system must fail.

JOHN A. GRAY

THE NEW BEING. By Paul Tillich. *Scribner's. $2.75.*

Paul Tillich's latest, *The New Being*, is a smallish volume of twenty-three sermons, originally leveled at college students and seminarians, but big in impact, with a wider "fall out" than the merely clerical and academic. Tillich's "new being" is recognizable as Saint Paul's "new creation." Modern man still stands on the same quicksands of earth and time, subject to the same dis-ease. Basic, however, to the Christian Good News are the Three R's: reconciliation, reunion, resurrection. God has invaded human creation for the purpose of drawing humanity to the source of life. Human well-being is ultimately impossible if cut off from this source. This predicament is overcome by the Christ who makes possible a new integration of life born in the ashes of the old. This can happen now, and will endure in spite of the pulls of physical and human forces opposed to the harmonizing of creation in the power of love. For Tillich the message of Christianity is not the Christian religion but the announcement that a new dimension of living is possible in our human situation.

The New Being is like breathing rarefied air on a mountain top, once having been released from confinement. Here is an excellent introduction to prophetic religion at its modern best, and in modern dress.

R. W. BARNES

THE SANE SOCIETY. By Erich Fromm. *Rinehart. $5.00.*

In this continuation of many of the ideas first presented in *Escape from Freedom,*

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Erich Fromm deals with the essential problem of modern man: alienation from nature, from his fellow men and from himself. As a result of this alienation, coupled with automatization, he has become the consumer and the trader, with consumption and production the ends of his existence. Man, having lost sight of himself and his potential, approaches insanity.

Dr. Fromm does not see any hope in either free capitalism or authoritarian communism. Both systems, based on an industrialization aimed at increasing economic efficiency and wealth, are highly materialistic and centralized. "Everybody is a cog in the machine, and has to function smoothly. In the West, this is achieved by a method of psychological conditioning, mass suggestion, monetary rewards. In the East by all this, plus the use of terror."

The over-all import of this book is considerable, particularly in the presentation of Dr. Fromm's concept of *humanistic psychoanalysis*, a broad and general departure from Freud: "Even the most complete satisfaction of all his [man's] instinctive needs does not solve his *human* problems; his most intensive passions and needs are not those rooted in his body, but those rooted in the very peculiarity of his existence."

Dr. Fromm warns that there is no single road to sanity, that there can be no progress unless changes are attempted and made simultaneously in all spheres of man's existence. He sees great possibilities in the development of a humanistic communitarian socialism.

Although there will be much disagreement about this book, there can be no doubt but that it points the way to new concepts which embrace the sciences and the humanities. Perhaps, after all, it is not necessary for the lion and the lamb to lie down together if they can once learn to communicate.

BETSY SAUNDERS

JOHN DEWEY: His Contribution to the American Tradition. Edited with an Introduction by Irwin Edman. *Bobbs-Merrill. $3.50.*

Of the numerous questions studied in this work, none is more opportune than that proposition which states that individuals can find the security and protection that are prerequisite for freedom, as envisaged in American democracy, only in association with others. But it is in this alliance that there lies the greatest danger that the freedom of the individual may be victimized not only by the despotism of mass opinion, but also by his own unconscious acceptance of principles which are based on nothing more substantial than popular generalities. Democratic ends demand democratic methods, and John Dewey argued that it is through critical reflection and exploitation of the ways of interaction which exist between human nature and its cultural surroundings that man can come to understand those conditions which will bestow the greatest common "shared good."

The purpose of the "Makers of the American Tradition" series is to present, through original text and interpretation, the views of those men who have most influenced American life and thought. In his analysis of the teaching of one of these men, the late Irwin Edman admirably fulfilled the task requested of him.

RONALD FRAZEE

THE LIFE OF DAVID HUME. By Ernest Campbell Mossner. Illustrated. *Texas. $7.50.*

Professor Mossner has long been preoccupied with David Hume, and this "life" is the rich flowering of that preoccupation. He does remarkably well by Hume's technical philosophy, but he wishes to present Hume as a man who lived life, as well as one who thought about it. Hume was more a man of the world than are most philosophers. His diplomatic experience marks the successful outcome of his general intelligence applied to life. His sad experience with Rousseau and his not so sad experience with a famous French courtesan of the time mark the two poles of his practical participation in affairs.

No complete bifurcation of a philosopher from his philosophy can ever be wholly successful. The real life of a philosopher is the story of his philosophy. Hume set himself from an early age to be a writer, and a writer of the deepest sense he could com-

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mand. I personally think that Mossner does not exploit to the full Hume's radical dualism between action and thinking. More frankly than most philosophers when faced with the deep chasm, Hume just simply and frankly changed gears and went off to play a game or to take a drink until the mood for reflection was once more welcome. This book makes that clear but does not turn it to full account as the key to both Hume's life and his philosophy.

T. V. SMITH

THE CRIME OF GALILEO. By Giorgio de Santillana. Illustrated. *Chicago. $5.75.*

This work of lively scholarship puts into a new perspective the incredibly complicated factors underlying Galileo's trial, many of which the author finds oversimplified and distorted by both Catholic and Protestant historians.

Professor de Santillana's position is that after Galileo's invention of the telescope, it was the academicians who condemned him on the basis of Aristotelian physics, the Protestants who condemned him on Scriptural grounds, and the Catholics who respected him as an ingenious mathematician; and the author traces the blame for what followed to a handful of academicians and a few Jesuits and Dominicans for whom power within the Vatican was the real object. In a time of political tension, it was easy to decide that reasons of state "required" action that was "above" the law, and this single attempt to legislate philosophical issues and the falsification of one document led to centuries of hedging and evasion before, at the end of the nineteenth century, Galileo's interpretation of Scripture was finally proclaimed official Church doctrine.

Trials for heresy have, necessarily, a special legal structure, and Professor de Santillana sees Galileo's position as legally unassailable. Although the soundness of his scientific hypothesis made little difference legally, it was debatable, since he lacked the laws of Kepler and Newton. It is a tribute to Galileo's genius that he conceived the new cosmology from very few clues.

De Santillana sees the problematic character of modern mathematical physics as well as the modern political parallels, and one of his most valuable insights is that the importance of Galileo's trial is not that "the scientist" was a victim of religious dogma, but that a searcher for truth was a victim of authoritarianism, complacency, intrigue and doublethink.

ANNE G. MANGOLD

APES, ANGELS, AND VICTORIANS: The Story of Darwin, Huxley, and Evolution. By William Irvine. Illustrated. *McGraw-Hill. $5.00.*

The Victorian era was one of incomparable paradox where bigotry and liberality were concomitant in the search for truth. Into this dual biography of Charles Darwin and Thomas Huxley, William Irvine has crammed a prodigious amount of detail. Either of these Victorian titans would foil most biographers, but Professor Irvine has managed to contain his narrative within 359 well-documented pages. Darwin's retiring, painstaking, almost dull personality is presented in contrast to the dynamic and brilliant character of Huxley. The one was the creator (despite the hovering shadow of Wallace) of an idea which the other promulgated. The idea itself inspired a plethora of intellectual and religious charges and countercharges which makes modern controversy seem tame. On the whole, Darwin, whose "muddleheadedness made him a modern," is drawn more realistically than is Huxley in this biography. The latter's mental agility continually eludes analysis. "Huxley's strength is that, in the last analysis, he did not level his ideas down to dullness."

Professor Irvine has generously allowed Huxley and Darwin to speak for themselves—and for evolution—by utilizing plentiful excerpts from contemporary letters, articles and speeches. Matching their eloquence with his own scholarly understanding of the Victorian dilemma, the author has given us as competent a book as can be found.

JANE HALE

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MR. SECRETARY CECIL AND QUEEN ELIZABETH. By Conyers Read. Illustrated. *Knopf. $7.95.*

One of the first appointments made by Elizabeth I on her accession to the throne was that of William Cecil as Principal Secretary, a post he held for fifteen years. The author of this book, an eminent historian of Tudor England, has arranged his material topically, making it possible to follow the interplay of Queen and Secretary in the shaping of England's major policies during those fifteen critical years.

A man of integrity and discretion, Cecil was also a cautious opportunist in affairs of state, with sharp insight into the probable moves of his adversaries. Hence he was admirably suited to the task of guiding the brilliant, obstinate young Queen through the multifarious difficulties of her early years ruling a nation faced with deep religious discords, pressing fiscal problems, and a decidedly shaky position among the European nations. The end of fifteen years not only found England considerably stronger, but found Cecil (by then Lord Burghley) fully established in the Queen's confidence after more than one attempt had been made to discredit him.

The rarity of firsthand sources, which has complicated Mr. Read's already arduous task, blurs the early chapters on Cecil's background, education and early career with complex detective work and the necessary exposition of evidence. But in the Elizabethan years, the records—though never plentiful—become more satisfactory, the focus sharpens, and both Mr. Secretary and the events surrounding him emerge more clearly. While Cecil as a complete human being remains elusive, this book as a whole is an absorbing study of "one of the greatest partnerships in English history."

ELIZABETH FRAZEE

YOUNG SAM JOHNSON. By James L. Clifford. *McGraw-Hill. $5.75.*

As Boswell found Johnson reluctant to talk about his early years, he would be surprised to learn how much Professor Clifford has been able to find out about them—thanks to the sort of tireless research the eighteenth century was just beginning to recognize as possible. Being both a first-class investigator and an equally skillful synthesist of the scattered facts which others have unearthed, Professor Clifford is able to put together a vivid and lively picture of what life in Lichfield and London was like, as well as a picture of the part Johnson took in it up to the time when he first began to emerge as a man of some note. *Young Sam Johnson* is a very readable book as well as a real contribution to knowledge.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

BOSWELL ON THE GRAND TOUR: Italy, Corsica, and France, 1765-1766. Edited by Frank Brady and Frederick A. Pottle. Illustrated. *McGraw-Hill. $5.50.*

At the beginning of this installment in the life of James Boswell, our hero is setting forth from Geneva to conquer Italy, especially the Italian ladies. At the end he has returned to England and is reimmersing himself in "the Johnsonian aether." In between come the visit to Corsica, which was to give Boswell his chief claim to fame for a number of years, and a whole series of campaigns, sometimes conducted simultaneously and usually not very successfully, against various ladies whose obduracy was humiliating in view of the fact that more than one of them was reputed to be far from being a prude. Some of the material in this volume was printed during the twenties in the original *Private Papers,* but much is entirely new. There is an admirable introduction, and no one who has enjoyed the Yale Editions of the *Private Papers* to date is likely to find this volume disappointing.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

HANDEL: A Documentary Biography. By Otto Erich Deutsch. Illustrated. *Norton. $10.00.*

"The cumulative truth that results from chronological documentation" is the guiding principle of this Handel study. For this book, like its companion volume on

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Schubert, is an extensive compilation of documents bearing on the composer's life and work, rather than a varied miscellany of Handeliana, and is not the sort of book the casual reader is apt to thumb at leisure moments.

Professor Deutsch has chronologically organized pertinent data from newspapers, church records, letters, journals and all manner of contemporary documents, to comprise the substance of the book. Some connecting narrative is provided by the author's own comments, as well as by several extended quotations from John Mainwaring's biography published in 1760 and never reprinted in English since that time. Many of the documents become tedious when read one after the other; and so it must be, for it is as a complete reference work that this type of biography has its greatest value. Occasional excerpts, such as those from the *Spectator*, make for delightful reading, and some of the more candid letters and journal entries are much more interesting in this form than they could be after distillation into secondhand narrative biography. In the clear-cut objective format of documentary biography, one is doubly impressed with such dramatic comments as those of Handel's librettist, Charles Jennens, with regard to the *Messiah* overture, "in which there are some passages far unworthy of Handel, but much more unworthy of the Messiah [libretto]."

Not only has Professor Deutsch given the student an indispensible reference tool, but he has shed the light of "cumulative truth" upon a personality misrepresented and romanticized since the time of Mainwaring.

DONALD LEAVITT

ENNIN'S DIARY: The Record of a Pilgrimage to China in Search of the Law. Translated from the Chinese by Edwin O. Reischauer. *Ronald. $7.50.*

ENNIN'S TRAVELS IN T'ANG CHINA. By Edwin O. Reischauer. *Ronald. $5.00.*

In 838 A.D. the Japanese Buddhist monk Ennin accompanied an official embassy to China so that he might visit religious shrines and acquire for his sect further enlightenment on its beliefs and texts. His nine-year travel diary, little known and only now translated in entirety from the original Chinese characters, is the first eyewitness account by a foreigner of the ninth century's most advanced civilization. From it emerges a unique picture of the prosperous and highly bureaucratic government of the T'ang Dynasty and of the Buddhist faith both at its apogee in China and during the persecution it shortly thereafter endured.

Dr. Reischauer, who is professor of Far Eastern languages at Harvard, has provided an exhaustive annotation of names and terms which appear in Ennin's narrative. Of greater interest to the lay reader, however, is his companion volume, which comments extensively on the political, social and economic conditions of T'ang China and draws on contemporaneous Oriental records to round out Ennin's own description of his ecclesiastical career.

These two volumes comprise a work of exacting scholarship which brings out of near obscurity a historical document of considerable interest. Students of Asia will welcome this supplement to the early cut and dried court records, and general readers will learn much of a great empire which flourished over a thousand years ago.

FRANCES ROBB

CARAVAGGIO STUDIES. By Walter Friedlaender. Illustrated. *Princeton. $25.00.*

Walter Friedlaender calls his handsome book *Caravaggio Studies* because it consists of a group of papers written at various times and brought together now that his view of the artist has crystallized. The modest title reflects the author's opinion that "the time has not yet come to write a conclusive and comprehensive biography of Caravaggio."

By a not surprising automorphism, the present work goes far toward supplying the reader (and the future biographer) with a sense of the ordinary man's reception of Caravaggio's painting. The comparisons and relations Professor Friedlaender finds in individual pictures are not unlike those

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one imagines the Seicento viewer might have found.

There has lately been some haggling among critics about Caravaggio's place in art history. Professor Friedlaender does not engage in this quarrel. Though exhibiting the mannerist traces in the artist's earlier work, he emphasizes his potent naturalism and assumes that he was an early Baroque painter. It is Caravaggio's naturalism, of course, that is his most startling quality and its effect on the contemporary spectator is implicit in every paragraph of the book.

In tracing the influences that shaped Caravaggio, influences mainly of an iconographic nature, I believe Professor Friedlaender has strained a bit too hard. And one could wish, since we wander so far afield to find those who influenced the artist, that some particulars were given of the influence he himself became for later painting.

EDGAR LEVY

THE ART OF INDIAN ASIA. By Heinrich Zimmer. Edited by Joseph Campbell. Two volumes. Illustrated. Bollingen Series. *Pantheon. $22.50.*

This work of Dr. Heinrich Zimmer, which was left unfinished at his untimely death, has now been ably brought to completion by Joseph Campbell. The text, presented with more than 650 stunning photographs of Indian (or Indian influenced) art and architecture, will long stand as a remarkable document.

The material extends back in time as far as the third pre-Christian millenium, and the geographic range is just as great. Monuments from areas that are seldom thought of as "Indian" are included; but in Dr. Zimmer's view, Indian art is synonymous with Indian religion. It must be remembered that Buddhism, which first appeared in India, spread far afield, and outside India proper is still one of the world's major religions.

Regardless of its size and scope the work is not, nor was it designed to be, an exhaustive study of any period or style. It is an introductory volume, presented in much the manner that Indian art presents itself. In both cases, an inner vitality finds outward expression within the confines of tradition in such a manner that direct communication between the observer and the monuments is possible. The text is a true complement to the splendid illustrations, not a mere description. Dr. Zimmer stated that the seeming appearance of sensuality in much of Indian art is the ". . . quiet joy-in-being of the vegetable kingdom. . . ." He thus gave one of the clearest definitions that this reviewer has ever read of the hold that the concept of the "Mother Goddess," the "Earth Mother" or "Mother Nature" has so long had on mankind.

JOHN F. HASKINS

A HISTORY OF MODERN CRITICISM, 1750-1950: Volume I, "The Later Eighteenth Century"; Volume II, "The Romantic Age." By René Wellek. *Yale. $4.50* and *$5.50.*

These two volumes brilliantly begin a job which, when completed, will provide twentieth-century students of literature with a tool they have desperately needed: a comprehensive, systematic study of the development and continuity of literary criticism during the last two hundred years. The only other "modern" work of comparable scope is George Saintsbury's turn-of-the-century *History of Criticism,* which is not only outdated but lacking in both comprehensiveness and system. The two volumes so far published (two more are in "active preparation") cover the main trends in criticism in four countries, England (with Scotland), France, Germany and Italy, from about 1750 to about 1830.

It is fortunate that Mr. Wellek is doing his job so well, for he is not likely to be jostled by competitors. Few combine as he does the essential qualifications—unusual linguistic skill; training in comparative literature; demonstrated competence as a practicing critic; moderation and balance in the midst of the fevered, if often scintillating, productions of the New Critics; and a writing style which gives clear expression to subtle and abstract ideas.

The most valuable general quality of the

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work, and the one perhaps most difficult to achieve, is the pattern of development and progress which Mr. Wellek is able to discern in a bewilderingly varied background of critical opinion. His pattern emerges from a purpose and a fixed point of view. The purpose is "to allow us to understand the contemporary situation." The point of view is essentially the modern, objective, analytical method of viewing a work of literary art as organic and as produced within and changed by history. But the author rides no personal thesis; he has a "high fidelity" range of sympathetic response. Those rare occasions when the viewpoint limits his interpretation (of Coleridge and Shelley, and, I think, of Johnson) in no way seriously damage the book's unusual combination of breadth and focus.

CALVIN D. LINTON

THE REPUBLIC OF LETTERS: Essays on Various Writers. By Louis Kronenberger. *Knopf. $3.75.*

Patricians and plebeians—Lady Mary Wortley Montagu and Daniel Defoe, Henry Adams and Thomas Wolfe—gather in Mr. Kronenberger's *Republic of Letters,* a collection of short essays, prefaces and reviews written during the past two decades. The pieces vary in length from the substantial "Eighteenth-Century Ideal" to an ephemeral review of *The Web and the Rock.* The limitation of miscellaneousness is diminished by division into a group of essays on eighteenth-century figures and a group on twentieth-century figures, unified further by their relation to Mr. Kronenberger's interest in the comic. His writing is constantly urbane, perceptive, self-effacing; though republican in taste, he cultivates an aristocratic tradition of style.

Mr. Kronenberger does not engage in polemics, but his expressed opposition to the New Criticism, though reticent, is recurrent. "Ours is an age with, critically, a greater capacity to analyze than to appreciate," he says in the essay on Pope; and he concludes, equivocally, about him, "Compared with what there is to appreciate in him, there is little to analyze." The weakness of the essay on Byron's *Don Juan,* the depreciatory attitude toward Virginia Woolf, the negligibleness of comment on "The Vanity of Human Wishes," as contrasted with the infectious gusto with which he writes of Johnson the man, may stem from Mr. Kronenberger's implied critical position.

On the other hand, he has the grateful talent for discussing writers as personalities —Pope, Johnson, Chesterfield, Boswell, Gibbon, for example—with an informed enthusiasm that impels the reader to return to their writings rather than to their biographies.

FRASER NEIMAN

AN END TO INNOCENCE: Essays in Culture and Politics. By Leslie Fiedler. *Beacon. $3.50.*

In the preface to his collected essays, twelve of which first appeared in various magazines between 1948 and 1955, the author writes: "It is a 'close reading' of recent events that I should like to think I have achieved, a reading that . . . tries to give to the testimony of a witness before a Senate committee or the letters of the Rosenbergs the same careful scrutiny we have learned to practice on the shorter poems of John Donne."

Mr. Fiedler not only succeeds in giving a reading so "close" to subjects ranging from Hiss to Hemingway that one is left with the impression that there is very little left to say on any of them, but he does so without stooping to hairsplitting.

The rise and demise of American innocence at home and as reflected abroad is his theme. The innocence of the young culture, country or person has its own particular beauty and strength when it appears in its natural context; but carried over to and even cultivated in adulthood, it will inevitably become a weakness—and a dangerous one.

Mr. Fiedler is not subtly suggesting that we get on with the business of growing up. In the usual process of growth, adulthood is upon us. However, he does imply that as we bend the twig of our existence, it is possible to create something better than a dis-

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sipated sapling which is ridden with the fungus of disillusionment.

For many, the pleasure in reading this small book will come with meeting Mr. Fiedler for the first time, for his thinking and his writing are disciplined to the point that he can afford to present them with passion and conviction.

BETSY SAUNDERS

THE CONTEMPORARY FRENCH NOVEL. By Henri Peyre. *Oxford. $5.00.*

Admirers and members of the "New School" of literary criticism will be disappointed in this study of the French novel during the last thirty years. The author, however, frankly announces that he is less concerned here with detailed analyses of structure and style (though neither aspect is ignored) than with the presentation of a panoramic view of his subject to "the enlightened American public, in and outside the universities." First presented as a series of lectures at Bryn Mawr College and since greatly expanded and brought up-to-date, his study of thirteen significant French authors from Marcel Proust to Simone de Beauvoir still bears the mark of its origin in its organizational clarity, discriminating lists of works in order of importance, short synopses, and individual critical bibliographies. The result is an invaluable handbook and guide for all students of the subject, as well as for the common reader bemused in Brentano's by the profuse offerings of Gallimard and Plon or by the increasing number of American translations. Professor Peyre has, above all, his compatriots' gift for perceptive and lucid generalization. It is, therefore, no accident that his opening chapters on the characteristics of French fiction, his discussion of existentialism, and his closing sections on the impact of the American novel and the present temper of France judged through French literature are especially enlightening.

WILLIAM H. MCBURNEY

THE CELESTINA: A Novel in Dialogue. Translated from the Spanish by Lesley Byrd Simpson. *California. $3.50.*

A new translation of *The Celestina* is a generous gift to English readers. This version, written in 1499, so resembles *Romeo and Juliet* in plot that it has often been considered its source. But the medieval prototypal lovers, Calisto and Melibea, are jointless, wax museum effigies beside the instrument of their union, the lusty, more truly Shakespearean old bawd, Celestina. The development of her character heralds the birth of the modern novel. For the first time techniques once used to treat only heroic, exemplary figures serve to animate not just an everyday character, but even a wicked one. Celestina is endowed with a self-motivating individuality and the force to bring us sympathetically to accept her evils as positive values. A heroine of negative valence, she chooses her course and faces its consequences: "Better to keep my word and suffer for it than to face the shame of backing out from cowardice."

Some scholars will regret, however, Mr. Simpson's choice of the first Spanish version for translation. The existential fact that over four centuries of Spanish readers have preferred this classic in its later, expanded form (1502) argues more convincingly for the superiority of the second version than questionable scholarly considerations about verisimiltude do for that of the first.

RUSSELL P. SEBOLD III

OVID'S METAMORPHOSES. Translated by Rolfe Humphries. *Indiana. $3.95.*

Even Ovid bows to Roman utilitarianism by raising the notion of metamorphosis into a kind of cosmic principle culminating in the deification of Julius Caesar, but Ovid alone of the major Roman poets can respect the playfulness of literary art without a bad conscience. He is an acute observer and effective expositor of human character, but he does not ask for literal belief in the ingeniously contrived connections between his stories or in the stories themselves. In the hands of a more somber poet, indeed, the brutal sex maniacs who are their leading personages would sicken any civilized reader.

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The formal vocabulary and syntax traditional to translations of the classics destroys Ovid by making him grotesque; colloquial prose makes him flippant. Mr. Humphries' procedure is exactly right. His flexible ten-beat lines make it clear that we are dealing with a work of art, not a chronicle; and his colloquial language does not obtrude a false remoteness. His *Metamorphoses* is surely the truest translation available to the English reader. Directly and seminally, Ovid has pervaded European literature and art more thoroughly than Homer himself, and we should be grateful to Mr. Humphries for making him so fully accessible.

MOSES HADAS

ISAAC BABEL: THE COLLECTED STORIES. Edited and translated from the Russian by Walter Morison. *Criterion Books. $5.00.*

De Maupassant was the avowed master of this Russian Jew who was born in Odessa in 1894, but Babel's work, economical and oblique—many of the stories are only a couple of pages long, and very few are over a half dozen—is denser, richer, and certainly less mechanical than the Frenchman's; it is, to use a Babel phrase, "frozen in silence and ineffably beautiful."

This book incorporates *Red Cavalry* (1929), long out of print, which deals with the author's experiences in Budenny's army, with the remainder of his small, but superlatively styled creative output. Stories of his childhood capture the odor, color and life of the ghetto in a way in which no other writer has, with the possible exception of Sholom Aleichem. There exists that same ambiguity between laughter and tears; just when an empathetic anguish seems almost unendurable, laughter begins to suffocate the reader. These stories deal with an earlier, more sanguine period, when the Jewish boy had only the pogrom to worry about; later Babel—fascinated and repelled by the Cossacks, their élan and violence—had the Russian Revolution to face and live through.

Babel's inability to believe that literature ought to or ever could be harnessed to an efficacious propaganda, and to see reality in the clear light of Marxian rationalism, was fatal. His writing, ambiguous and ironical, gracefully skirmishes allegiance to the palpably unalive. His genius finally cost him his life, for he died in a Russian concentration camp in 1939 or 1940. The destruction by Bolshevism of so extraordinary a genius is a loss to literature as incalculable as is the corresponding destruction of utopian ideology in all ingenuous men of Isaac Babel's generation.

DACHINE RAINER

A GOOD MAN IS HARD TO FIND. By Flannery O'Connor. *Harcourt, Brace. $3.50.*

It is dubious that good men are as hard to find as Flannery O'Connor would indicate in this collection of ten short stories, but it is certain that young writers as competent as Miss O'Connor are a rarity. In these initial stories, all orientated in the South, the author has accomplished something which is fast becoming unique in the creation of a short story. She has written stories with plots, and she has done so with ease and dignity. It is refreshing to leave the nubilous prose which has been so stylish of late and find in creations like "Good Country People" and "The Artificial Nigger" nuances of character, theme and plot skillfully blended. Miss O'Connor deserves praise for reminding readers that the explicit need not cancel the implicit in storytelling.

The familiar trappings of the Southern genre are here: degenerate aristocracy, the humor and pathos of poverty, brutality and lust. Miss O'Connor's stories are traditionally tainted by a preoccupation with the macabre, and frequently, as in "The Displaced Person," the heavy hand of tour de force intrudes. But the roundelay of improbability is subdued by the flexuous themes and memorable characters in this highly readable collection.

JANE HALE

COLLECTED POEMS 1955. By Robert Graves. *Doubleday. $4.50.*

These poems range in subject and style from love lyrics to restorations of Welsh

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charms, in geography from English countrysides to the Mediterranean. They are collected in keeping with the personality of the author. By turns savage and calm, metaphysical and bawdy as an old soldier, Graves is everywhere entirely himself—or at least one of his selves.

However, this is rather a selection than a collection, for many early poems have been excluded. And it is confusing to be told by the author that the "demand in poems" is for "punctilious and intuitive realism," and to find that he has excluded such realistic poems as "It's a Queer Time" in favor of poems about mythology.

One may quarrel with Graves or praise him, but no one can deny his vitality. He falls short of Yeats—whom he resembles in many ways—only in this: he writes few grand lines and he lacks a dimension of music. He is always talking about a particular subject—"Theseus and Ariadne" or "The Bedpost" or "The Glutton"—something that arouses his love or anger or tickles his fancy. But his subjects do not lift him beyond himself. However, it is a large self, with room in it for a dozen ordinary poets, and such men are rare in any age—particularly in our own.

LOUIS SIMPSON

Perception,
a life tool,
without an ethic
makes a fool.

ALICE VAN HISE

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